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REPORT

ON A

GENERAL SCHEME

FOR

EXTRAMURAL SEPULTURE.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty.

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REPORT

ON A

GENERAL SCHEME FOR EXTRAMURAL SEPULTURE.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR MAJESTY,

WE, the General Board of Health, being by the Statute (12 & 13 Vict., cap. 3) directed to cause inquiry to be made into the state of burial-grounds, and to frame, if necessary, a scheme to be submitted to Parliament for the improvement of interment in towns, have deemed it our duty, in relation to a subject which appears to us to involve considerations of national importance, not only to consult the evidence previously collected respecting the practice of interment, but to investigate the subject anew with reference to the most recent facts and experience.

The epidemic of the last year (1849), the severest that has afflicted the country in modern times, having destroyed in the metropolis alone no fewer than 16,000 persons, has brought under our notice additional evidence of the most important nature bearing on the practice of interment in towns; and this evidence appears to us to demand especial attention at the present time, because the past course of Asiatic cholera, both in this and other countries, forbids any rational expectation that this pestilence is extinguished and will visit us no more.

Considering the evidence which had been already presented to Parliament proving the injurious effects of the burial-grounds of the metropolis on the public health, and more especially showing their influence in increasing the susceptibility of the crowded populations in their immediate neighbourhood to whatever epidemic disease might chance to be prevalent, we deemed it our duty, at as early a period as was practicable after the outbreak of Asiatic cholera, to cause inquiry to be made by our superintending inspectors as to the present state of these burial-grounds, and we sought to mitigate the evils arising from them by placing those which were found to be in the condition most dangerous to health under such regulations as appeared to us needful for the public safety, and which we were empowered by the Legislature to enforce. In the course of the inquiries prescribed by the Act to be made in each case in which such burial-grounds were placed under regulation, new facts have been brought to light, which not

only corroborate the truth of the evidence previously promulgated, but also afford fresh proof of its practical importance.

The scheme for extramural interment which we now present, and which appears to us to afford the only effectual remedy for the evils in question, we have prepared in the first instance for the metropolis, with the view, by a separate bill for the metropolis, to provide for the peculiar circumstances under which it is placed; but we apprehend that the main principles of the plan will be found to be applicable to other towns, and that the evidence submitted will show that country towns, as far as they have been inspected, require such a measure at least as much as the metropolis. The preliminary inquiries, setting forth the actual condition of the burial-grounds in London, required by the Act to be made before any scheme for the removal of interment can be adopted, we have assigned to our Medical Inspector, Dr. Sutherland, whose Report we append.

The special investigations and report required by the Act with reference to each particular burial-ground, before the issue of any order placing it under regulation, we have in most instances assigned to Dr. Milroy, to whose descriptions and statements we shall hereafter have to call attention; but additional information has also been received from the inquiries and reports of Mr. Bowie and Mr. Ranger.

An extended examination of the state of the vaults of the metropolitan churches has been made by Dr. Waller Lewis; and the facts detailed, showing the true nature of this mode of entombment, and the deleterious effects of the atmosphere produced by it, appear to us to possess peculiar interest and importance.

We have ascertained by personal examinations the state and capacity of the principal cemeteries in the neighbourhood of London. We have visited various sites proposed for new cemeteries, with a view of determining, from our own observation, whether those sites possess the requisite conditions for placing interment for the metropolis in a satisfactory state.

We have engaged to aid us in our investigations Mr. J. Griffith, the architect, who planned the first, the largest, and the most successful of the new metropolitan cemeteries, that of Kensal Green, founded like all the others on the principle of joint-stock companies, though with a philanthropic design. His experience recommended him to us as possessing the most extensive practical knowledge on the subject. We further directed one of our inspectors, Mr. Cresy, who has also paid much attention to the subject, to make a special report on a full view which he appeared to have taken of the requirements of the population.

We have consulted the experience of persons practically engaged in the business of interments on the largest scale.

With reference to religious rites, and questions of detail connected with the efficiency and impressiveness of their celebration, we have

had the valuable aid of the Rev. Charles Marshall, the Vicar of St. Bride's, Fleet-street.

Though, as we have stated, our attention has been mainly directed to the metropolis, extensive examinations and consultations with respect to Manchester, Liverpool, Taunton, Hull, and other towns, have been held by Dr. Sutherland.

We have further obtained, by the personal investigations on the spot of two of our superintending inspectors, the most recent experience of the improved modes of sepulture adopted on the Continent.

From the information thus acquired we are prepared to submit a special and detailed plan of extramural sepulture for the metropolis.

But we feel assured that neither the grounds on which we recommend this scheme, nor the necessity of carrying it into effect as a whole, if it be attempted at all, can be understood without a full representation of the actual state of things which has rendered such a measure imperatively and urgently necessary.

In describing the circumstances connected with the present practice of interment in towns, we shall be under the necessity of making statements of a very painful nature, and sometimes of representing scenes which we feel most reluctant publicly to exhibit; but we should ill discharge the duty intrusted to us if we were to shrink from the full disclosure of the truth, more especially as a thorough knowledge of the evil is indispensable to an appreciation of the only effectual remedy.

There appear to be two points of view in which the practice of intramural interment requires to be considered—

I. Its effect on the public health;
II. On the decency and solemnity of burial.

I. That the interment of the dead in large numbers, in confined spaces, close to the dwellings of dense masses of the population, is injurious to the public health, is proved by a body of evidence which, we apprehend, has produced conviction in the minds of all who have seriously considered it. Without restating that evidence, which has been widely promulgated, and which has indeed now become matter of familiar knowledge, we may safely rest the sanitary part of the case on the single fact, that the placing of the dead body in a grave and covering it with a few feet of earth does not prevent the gases generated by decomposition, together with the putrescent matters which they hold in suspension, from permeating the surrounding soil, and escaping into the air above and the water beneath. Under the pressure of only three-fourths of an inch of water, gas, common coal-gas for instance, rapidly makes its way to the surface through a stratum of sand or gravel several feet in thickness, the soil appearing to oppose scarcely any resistance to its passage. The evolution of

the gases of decomposition takes place with so much force, that they often expand and occasionally burst the leaden coffin in which the body is confined; and when, as in a common grave, they pass gradually and without restraint into the surrounding earth, they are only in part absorbed by the soil, and some of them are scarcely absorbed at all, but are diffused in every direction, though it would appear in the upward direction chiefly, thus directly polluting the air. Such indeed is the tendency of these gases to reach the surface, that it does not appear to be possible to prevent the occurrence. "If," says Mr. Leigh, a chemist at Manchester, who appears to have paid particular attention to this subject, "bodies were interred eight or ten feet deep in sandy or gravelly soils, I am convinced little would be gained by it; the gases would find a ready exit from almost any practicable depth;" while it is obvious that their occasional escape would be still more easy through the fissures which are so common in clayey soils.

"I have examined," says Dr. Lyon Playfair, "various churchyards and burial-grounds for the purpose of ascertaining whether the layer of earth above the bodies is sufficient to absorb the putrid gases evolved. The slightest inspection shows that they are not thoroughly absorbed by the soil lying over the bodies. I know several churchyards from which most fœtid smells are evolved; and gases with similar odour are emitted from the sides of sewers passing in the vicinity of churchyards, although they may be more than thirty feet from them. If these gases are thus evolved laterally, they must be equally emitted in an upward direction."

Some of these gases, as has been stated, are either not absorbed at all, or only very sparingly,—carbonic acid gas for example; yet so abundant is its evolution that, in old churchyards or near "grave-pits," the ground is absolutely saturated with it, so that, when a deep grave is dug, such an amount of it is rapidly collected that the workmen cannot descend without danger. Dr. Reid states, as the result of his own observation, that, on sinking a pit in the earth, near which a number of bodies were interred, the pit in a few hours became filled with such an amount of carbonic acid gas, arising from the decomposition of the neighbouring bodies, that the workmen could not re-enter it without danger; that lives have been lost by the incautious descent into such a pit only a few hours after it has been opened; that a well of carbonic acid gas is thus formed, into which a constant stream of the same gas continues perpetually to filter from the adjacent earth; and that, in fact, the earth around these pits is loaded with carbonic acid gas as other places are with water.

Dr. Playfair estimates that the amount of the gases evolved annually from the decomposition of 1117 corpses per acre,

which is very far short of the number actually interred in the metropolitan graveyards, is not less than 55,261 cubic feet; but as 52,000 interments take place annually in the metropolis, according to this ratio the amount of gases emitted is equal to 2,572,580 cubic feet, the whole of which, beyond what is absorbed by the soil, must pass into the water below or the atmosphere above.

That these putrescent gases do affect both the water and the atmosphere, as well as the soil itself, the water and the soil being discoloured by them, and all of them acquiring an offensive odour, is proved beyond the possibility of doubt.

With reference to the soil, Dr. Milroy adduces the evidence of Mr. Shepard, superintendent of the cemetery at Abney Park, which it must be borne in mind has been only recently converted into a burial-ground, to prove that the earth near the coffin not only acquires a peculiar and offensive odour, but always becomes darkened. Mr. Shepard says,—

"He has always observed, on opening a grave where an interment had been made a considerable time before, that the earth for 3 or 4 feet immediately above the coffin was of a darker colour than the earth nearer the surface of the ground. This staining he attributes to the action of the evolved gases rising upwards. This upward escape of putrid gas goes on, he thinks, for 12 or 15 months, and is, according to his observation, most active during the first six months after burial. The earth undoubtedly emits an offensive smell. He is convinced that the mould that has become darkened by the rising gases from a coffin, gives out a perceptible smell for at least 12 or 15 months after burial."

It appears from evidence hereafter to be stated, that in old and crowded churchyards the mould is of a peculiar dark colour, in some instances described as "black and pitchy," gives off an offensive odour, and is greasy to the touch.

The impregnation of water with offensive matters derived from a neighbouring churchyard is a frequent occurrence. When a well is sunk, or a sewer passes, near a churchyard, the water of the well and the contents of the sewer become impregnated with this peculiar odour, the exudation from the churchyard making its way through the brick-work, and sometimes even through cement. Thus it is stated by the chairman and surveyor of the Holborn and Finsbury division of sewers that

"When the sewers come in contact with the churchyards the exudation is most offensive; the matter from the churchyards exudes through the sides of the sewers; the adjacent waters will find their way through the walls of these sewers, and will penetrate even through cement; the exudations from the churchyard will pass through brick-work, and it is impossible to prevent it. On the occasion of constructing a sewer in the parish of St. Pancras,* the exudation from the church-

* For a description of the state of the churchyard of St. Pancras see pp. 59, 60.

yard into the sewer was peculiarly offensive, and was known to arise from the decomposition of the bodies; this was within a distance of 30 feet from the churchyard."

There is reason to believe that it is the putrescent animal matter which is held in suspension in the gases of decomposition, and which communicates to them their odour, that exerts the most injurious action on the health. The odour itself is very peculiar: it is the smell which is perceived on entering a close room containing a corpse; or the smell which clothes have when they are removed from a dead body. The following is an example of the evidence given by numerous witnesses:—

"A main sewer runs through the burial-ground: the smell from the dead bodies came through this sewer up our drain, and until we got it trapped it was quite unbearable. I am sure the smell came from the burial-ground; the smell coming from the drain was exactly the same as that which reached us when the wind was west and blew upon us from the burial-ground. The smell was very peculiar; it exactly resembled the smell which clothes have when they are removed from a dead body. My servants would not remain because of it."

All classes of witnesses bear testimony that the stench proceeding from some of the crowded and confined graveyards in the metropolis is frequently so great that the residents in the neighbourhood are obliged to shut their windows for hours and days together; and the general remark is, that it is always worst when hot weather succeeds rain, the putrid effluvia being then exhaled most abundantly.

The case, however, in which these emanations probably exist in the atmosphere in the greatest degree of intensity, is under the following combination of circumstances, namely—when a crowded churchyard is situated in the midst of a dense population, in a locality which is badly drained, and where even such imperfect drainage is liable to be impeded periodically by the state of the tide. And such is at the present time the condition of the Houses of Parliament, all the drains of which are closed at high water.

With reference to the noxious emanations affecting this locality, Dr. Reid says,—

"I am fully satisfied, not only from my own observation, but from different statements that have reached me, and also from the observations of parties who have repeatedly examined the subject at my request, that the state of the burying-ground around St. Margaret's church is prejudicial to the air supplied at the Houses of Parliament, and also to the whole neighbourhood. One of them, indeed, stated to me lately, that he had avoided the churchyard for the last six months, in consequence of the effects he experienced the last time he visited it. These offensive emanations have been noticed at all hours of the night and morning; and even during the day the smell of the churchyard has been considered to have reached the vaults in the House of Com-

mons, and traced to sewers in its immediate vicinity. When the barometer is low, the surface of the ground slightly moist, the tide full, and the temperature considerable—all which circumstances tend to favour the evolution of effluvia both from the grave-pits and the drains—the most injurious influence upon the air is observed. In some places not far from this churchyard fresh meat is frequently tainted in a single night, on the ground-floor, in situations where at a higher level it may be kept without injury for a much longer period. In some cases, in private houses as well as at the Houses of Parliament, I have had to make use of ventilating shafts, or of preparations of chlorine, to neutralize the offensive and deleterious effects which the exhalations produced, while, on other occasions, their injurious influence has been abundantly manifested by the change induced in individuals subjected to their influence on removing to another atmosphere."

In estimating the influence of these deleterious emanations on the living system, it is necessary to bear in mind the fact that organic matter which is passing through the process of decay is capable of communicating its own peculiar state to similar organic matter with which it may come in contact, whether living or dead. Decaying wood or tainted flesh, for example, is capable of causing similar decay or putrefaction in another piece of wood or flesh. Putrescent gases evolved from sewers occasion the putrescence of meat or vegetables hung in the vicinity of the place from which they escape. Putrescent meat taken as food communicates a state of putrefaction to the blood, producing a disease similar to rot.

When the living body is exposed to these putrid emanations in a highly concentrated state, the effects are immediate and deadly; when more diluted they still taint the system, inducing a morbid condition which renders it more prone to disease in general, but especially to all the forms of epidemic disease, and which further predisposes it to pass into a state verging upon, if not actually that of putrefaction.

The most recent examination of the graveyards of the metropolis appears to us to show that they contain putrefying matter enough to communicate this putrefying process to those who are exposed to it. It is stated by Sir James Macgregor that on one occasion in Spain, soon after 20,000 men had been put into the ground within the space of two or three months, the troops that remained exposed to the emanations of the soil, and that drank the water from the wells sunk in the neighbourhood of the spot, were attacked by malignant fevers and by dysentery; and that the fevers constantly put on the dysenteric character. In the metropolis, on spaces of ground not exceeding in all 218 acres, closely surrounded by the abodes of the living, crowded together in dense masses, upwards of 50,000 dead bodies are buried every year.

In Bethnal-green burial-ground alone, consisting of an area of about two acres and a half, there have been interred, since its

opening, in the year 1746, upwards of 56,000 dead bodies. In Bunhill-fields burial-ground, City-road, consisting of an area of less than four acres, there have been interred, from April 1713 to August 1832, according to the registry, which, however, in the earlier years was very imperfectly kept, 107,416 dead bodies. But in St. Pancras churchyard, one half of which has been used as a burial-place for at least six centuries, there have been deposited the remains of more than twenty generations, and in this space of ground, which does not even now exceed four acres, and a large portion of which was considered as full to excess twenty years ago, there have been interred since that period upwards of 26,000 bodies.

Estimating the duration of a generation at 30 years, there must have been interred in the small space of 218 acres, in the last generation, a million and a half of dead bodies, and within the next 30 years more than another million and a half of the dead, that is, a large proportion of those who now people the metropolis, will have to be crowded into those same churchyards, unless other and better provision for interment be made.

There are, without doubt, spots in the metropolis at the least as crowded with dead bodies as the spot referred to by Sir James Macgregor; and that the people of the metropolis suffer constantly in the same way and from a similar cause as the troops in Spain suffered on this particular occasion, will, we apprehend, appear but too evident from the melancholy representations which it is now our duty to present.

In the year 1843, as a supplement to the Report on the Sanitary Condition of the Labouring Population of Great Britain, there was published the result of a special inquiry made under the direction of Sir James Graham, then Secretary of State for the Home Department, into the practice of interment in towns. This supplementary Report, besides having been presented to the Members of Parliament, was sent to every incumbent in every town in the kingdom, as well as to the chairman and vice-chairman of the Boards of Guardians, and to many private persons. The official distribution, under the authority of the Home Secretary, who did great public service by the promulgation of this information, amounted to several thousand copies. The intention of the wide publication of this Report was that the evils, moral as well as physical, shown by the evidence to be attendant on the common practice of interment might be known, and operate to their abatement, and to the voluntary adoption of improved practices, independently of any direct legislation.

It appears to be highly important to keep in view the effect of the full and ample exposition of remedies and improvements, and the extent of the adoption of them by trading companies, as well as by parishes. With this view we shall have occasion to revert to much of the evidence promulgated six years ago.

With reference to more recent examinations it will be observed

that, in the descriptions given of the effects produced by the emanations from burial-grounds on the persons immediately exposed to them, constant mention is made of annoyance from offensive and noisome smell. It does not necessarily follow that offensive smells are injurious to health, and it is certain that the most deadly atmospheric poisons may be present in great intensity, where no indication of their existence is given by the smell. But, on the other hand, the sense of smell has been justly described as a sentinel placed at the portals of life to warn us of the presence or approach of what is injurious to life; and beneficent Nature, in order to put us upon our guard against the noxious matters arising from the decay of organic substances, has made them disgusting to us.

That, in the present case, the offensive smell is merely the notification to us of the presence or approach of matters containing noxious properties, is proved by the sudden and severe effects sometimes produced on the system by temporary exposure to them; and by the localization of diseases, such as fever, diarrhœa, and cholera, among the classes of the population habitually exposed to them.

The most precise evidence, however, of the power of these offensive emanations to act injuriously on the system, and, at the same time, that which impresses the imagination the most strongly, is derived from the individual instances of sudden and intense disease produced by exposure to such effluvia in a concentrated form; such as is exemplified, for example, in the case of the crew of the American ship in Whampoa Roads near Canton, who were suddenly seized with malignant pestoid fever on the inhalation of the effluvia from a recently interred body; and the fate of the two gravediggers in London, who in 1841 perished instantly on descending into a grave in St. Botolph's churchyard, Aldgate. The case of the crew of the American ship was briefly this:—Four men went on shore to bury one of their comrades who had died of dysentery. They happened to select a spot for the grave in which a human body had been interred two months previously, as was afterwards ascertained. The instant the spade went through the lid of the coffin a most dreadful effluvium issued forth, and the two men engaged in the work fell down nearly lifeless. With difficulty their companions approached near enough to drag them from the spot, and to fill up the place with earth. The two men who were thus seized gradually recovered sufficiently to be able, with assistance, to reach the boat and to return on board. By the succeeding morning the symptoms of malignant pestoid fever were fully developed in both men, of which disease one of them died on the fourth day, and the other on the morning of the fifth.* Of

* With reference to these two fatal cases, it appears that on the morning after the men had been on shore, and when the attack of fever that followed was fully developed, they were visited by an assistant-surgeon from an English Indiaman lying in the Roads,

their two comrades, who had not been so directly exposed to the noxious effluvia, one had a severe attack of fever on the eighth day after having been on shore—a bubo, however, having made its appearance on the fifth day; and the fourth man had only a slight indisposition, which speedily passed off.

It cannot be doubted that matters which, when highly concentrated, produce such deadly effects, act with no less certainty, though less visibly, when they exist in a more diluted state. It appears to us that there are clear indications of such injurious action in the evidence derived from recent minute and careful inspections of burial-grounds, particularly those of the metropolis. We beg to call attention to the fact which will be found to be so constantly repeated in the descriptions now to be cited of the condition of particular graveyards in London, that cholera was unusually prevalent in their immediate neighbourhood. The same observation has been made by Dr. Sutherland, who has had numerous opportunities of testing the fact both in London and other large towns.

"I witnessed several outbreaks of cholera in the vicinity of graveyards," he reports, "which left no doubt on my own mind as to the connexion between the disease itself and such local influences. Two instances occurred at Bristol, the particulars of which I reported at the time to the General Board of Health. The results in both were most disastrous. Long-continued contact with the morbific influences proceeding from graveyards and other nuisances appeared to have produced such a degree of susceptibility, that, as soon as the epidemic touched the locality, the people fell before it. There is evidence to prove that a large fatality took place also during the last cholera epidemic in the neighbourhoods immediately adjoining the graveyards of the metropolis. It is not always easy to separate the effect of each specific cause of disease where a number co-operate, but after a most extensive experience the evidence which has come before me has produced on my own mind an abiding conviction that the effect of many causes of unhealthiness, and that of churchyards amongst others, has been very much under-rated. I have no doubt whatever that the burial-grounds as at present constituted are a continual source of pestilence; slow, perhaps, in its operation, and hence overlooked by ordinary observers. They are undermining the constitutional stamina of thou-

who reported the following symptoms, namely: very acute headache, sense of giddiness and dimness of sight, present more or less from the opening of the grave; eyes of a peculiar muddy appearance, resembling that generally observed in cases of Indian cholera; oppression about the præcordia; dull heavy pains in the regions of the heart and liver; extreme debility; pulse from 110 to 120, weak, fluttering, and irregular; occasional spasmodic twitchings of the muscles of the lower extremities; nausea and slight diarrhœa; rigor, succeeded by heat and flushing; tongue loaded; urine scanty and high-coloured; skin sometimes dry and sometimes covered with a clammy sweat. On the fourth day from the commencement of the attack, numerous petechiæ appeared on the breast and arms, and in one of the patients a large bubo formed in the right groin, and another in the axilla of the same side, which speedily ran on to suppuration. For two days previously to death the gums bled freely.—*Report of Mr. Hamilton, Surgeon, of H.M.S. Britomart, cited in the 2nd Vol. of Medico-Chirurgical Review*, 1825.

sands of our town populations, while people are denying that they have any injurious tendency; and it is only when some epidemic comes to try it like a touchstone, that the consequence of long antecedent neglect becomes so apparent as to rivet attention and excite alarm."

From among the numerous reports which we have received as to the present state of the burial-grounds of the metropolis, we select the following examples, and the descriptions here given may be regarded as applicable in a greater or less degree to almost all the burial-grounds examined.

The account given by Dr. Milroy of the state of some of the burial-grounds inspected by him is as follows:—

St. Ann's, Blackfriars.—"Very limited dimensions; completely hemmed in on all sides by buildings; ground so entirely occupied that it is only by boring that the gravedigger can find out where a new grave can be opened. From this functionary's own admission it appears that the revolting circumstance recorded in the 'Times' of the 4th September, 1849, respecting a mutilated portion of a body being thrust into a grave where a coffin had just been deposited, is in the main quite true. On inquiring of the man how the one portion of the body was separated from the other, he said that it had fallen out from one of the sides of the grave when he was digging it! Some of the inmates of the houses overlooking the pauper part of the burial-ground state that they have seen skulls with portions of the scalp and hair adhering to them thrown out from a newly-made grave. Even on the undisturbed surface of this part of the ground I could observe numerous fragments of bones lying about, so that it is probably no exaggeration to say that if this ground could become solidified it would be found to be a sort of *breccia* composed in a great measure of fossilized human remains. Most of the occupants of the dwellings surrounding the churchyard complain much of offensive exhalations from it, more especially for the last two or three months; and during this time cholera has been very prevalent among them. The effluvia from one grave in particular are described as having been more than usually disgusting. It was opened about four or five weeks ago, and was not entirely closed until the 2nd September, after having received eight or nine bodies."

Lock Burial-ground, Dover-road, Southwark, belonging to Saint George the Martyr.—"The very appearance of its surface indicates that it is surcharged with human remains; yet within the last nine or ten weeks no fewer than 240 bodies have been deposited in it. I was informed by an eye-witness that 16 coffins were recently put into one grave, one immediately after the other, that is, in the course of one hour; and the statement was not contradicted by the parish clerk, who suggested, however, that the grave was probably double. This was in the month of August, during the height of the epidemic. There is sometimes not more than eight or ten inches of earth between the coffin and the surface. Funeral service being performed only three days in the week, corpses are detained until the regular time of burial comes round. They are often left unburied all night, lying on the open ground. When I was in the ground, I found three coffins in the dead-house awaiting burial, and a fourth not even screwed down in an

adjoining shed. Most of the inmates of the houses overlooking this graveyard complain much of most offensive effluvia from it; and Dr. Tod, a medical practitioner in the immediate neighbourhood, is of opinion that it has of late produced most noxious effects. Already several fatal cases of cholera have occurred in these houses, and a good many of them are now deserted in consequence."

ST. GEORGE THE MARTYR, SOUTHWARK.—"It is closely surrounded by dwellings, chiefly of the lower sort, on three sides, and on the other side by the east end of the church. The situation, therefore, is most unfavourable, especially in a low-lying locality like that of Southwark, where a great amount of disease has been prevalent during the present season. In two graves which were open at the time of my visit, the remains of bones and coffins which had been thrown out showed how fully occupied the ground had been. Several of the residents in the houses overlooking the churchyard complain of offensive effluvia from it, especially after rain. Three fatal cases of cholera have recently occurred in these dwellings."

BURIAL-GROUND, PARKER-ROW, DOCKHEAD.—"The depth to which a grave can be dug here does not exceed 5 or 6 feet; and yet in such a grave 2 and 3 coffins are sometimes placed. There must consequently be not more than a foot or two of earth, at most, between the top coffin and the surface. The residents in most of the houses in Parker-row, which faces the front ground (the least crowded of the two), complain very much of the exceedingly offensive effluvia from it, more especially early in the morning, and in warm foggy weather. There has been a great deal of sickness among the inhabitants during the last three months, and several deaths from cholera took place some weeks ago."

TOTTENHAM-COURT-ROAD CHAPEL BURIAL-GROUND.—"One of the managers of the chapel informed me that the average number of interments in the course of a year has been of late between 400 and 500; but there appears reason to suppose that it is considerably higher: since the beginning of July, to the present date, September the 7th, 1849, 134 burials have taken place. The gravedigger admits to 7 or 8 coffins of adults, and to between 20 and 30 coffins of children, being deposited in one grave, the grave being only partially closed until the last coffin be put in. Many of the inmates of tenements overlooking the north division of this graveyard testify to putrid effluvia emanating from it, especially when hot weather follows rain. The effluvia are always worse after a grave has been opened; and are then often so offensive that the residents are obliged to keep their windows closed. Mr. Hallion, surgeon, residing at No. 50, Albert-street, Regent's-park, is of opinion that typhus fever has been induced among some of the residents in John-street, which faces the rear of the burial-ground, by the fetid and noxious miasmata proceeding therefrom."

NEW BUNHILL-FIELDS, GOLDEN-LANE, ST. LUKE'S.—"This graveyard is nearly surrounded on all sides by dwellings; but there is a high wall, of from 20 to 24 feet in height, intervening all round. Mr. Smith, surgeon, of 154, Whitecross-street, and one of the recently appointed medical officers, informs me that the neighbourhood of this

burial-ground is always infested with fever; and that in the adjoining courts, within 200 yards of it, some most malignant and rapidly fatal cases of cholera have recently occurred. Mr. Powell also, who has been a parochial medical officer of the district for the last 10 years, is of opinion that the unwholesomeness of the locality is materially aggravated by the emanations from this graveyard."

St. George, Hanover-square, Uxbridge-road.—"The sexton admits that it is only by boring that a spot for a grave can be found. Of course, no exact register of the precise localities where interments have already taken place has been kept. A grave that is 12 feet in depth will hold as many as 6 or 7 coffins. The average number of interments for several years prior to 1848 was rather more than 1000 per annum. Last year, 1848, the number rose to 1183 in all; and since the 1st of July of the present year to this date, September 18th, 358 have been buried in the ground. Upon making inquiries of the residents in a number of the houses that overlook this burial-ground, and especially that portion of it which is devoted to pauper-burials, I found that they very generally complained of offensive effluvia perceived at certain times, and usually most after rain followed by hot weather. The medical attendants of several of those families have recommended them to leave their dwellings in consequence. And here I should observe that a memorial, signed by upwards of 40 medical practitioners in Paddington and its vicinity, has been recently addressed to the General Board of Health, in which these gentlemen very strongly express their conviction that the exhalations from this burial-ground have proved injurious to the health of the inhabitants; an opinion entitled to great weight, as expressive of the convictions of those very persons who, from their own personal observation, are the best fitted to judge most accurately upon the subject."

St. Mary's, Newington, Surrey.—"Many of the residents in the immediate neighbourhood complain of foul effluvia proceeding from this burial-ground, so much so that at times they have been obliged to shut their windows. The nuisance has been greater of late; nor can this be wondered at when it is known that no fewer than 436 bodies have been interred there during the last nine or ten weeks. The enormous amount of festering corruption that has been recently deposited cannot fail to be continually giving rise to foul and noxious gases, which are exhaled from the surface of the ground into the atmosphere. There is reason to believe that these exhalations have served to give increased virulence and diffusion to the poison of the dreadful epidemic, the effects of which have been so fatally experienced for some time past in this parish."

New Bunhill-fields Cemetery in Deverell-street, New Kent-road.—"Surrounded on three sides by dwellings. Besides the graveyard, an immense number of burials has been made in the vaults under the chapel in the ground. The number of coffins piled up one above another has probably exceeded a thousand. On the south side of the chapel there is a spot where there is a vast accumulation of bones close to the surface. With my stick I turned out two skulls, several thigh and other bones, some of them comparatively recent. Judging from the appearance of the place, I should say that there is an enormous

mass of human remains brought from other parts of the ground deposited here. Mingled with these are bones of the lower animals, as well as numerous fragments of coffins, which have evidently been broken up. "Several of the residents in Theobald's-street and Deverell-street, which run along the east and west sides of the graveyard, state that they have experienced offensive effluvia from the burial-ground, and several deaths from cholera have taken place in both these streets."

St. Olave and St. John, Tooley-street.—"Extent very little more than half an acre: has been used for the purposes of interment since the time of Queen Elizabeth. During the present year no fewer than 386 burials have already taken place; of these 196 have been within the last 12 weeks. The graveyard is open to Tooley-street on the south side; on the other three sides it is enclosed by buildings. As may be supposed, the ground is exceedingly full of human remains. No grave was open at the time of my visit, but, wherever the earth had recently been disturbed, there was the surface strewed with bones and small pieces of coffins. The sexton of St. John's mentioned that a few years ago there was an immense pit, 16 feet deep and 12 feet square, in the north-west corner of the ground, for the reception of the bones from the graves as they were dug. In the course of 9 or 10 years it became quite full, and was then closed up. The sexton of St. Olave's, who has been in office only three months, admits that in about a quarter of the number of graves which have been made under his direction one or more coffins have been exposed at the sides of the grave by the falling in of the earth. Mr. Wright, one of the churchwardens of St. Olave, states that one of the gravediggers acknowledged to him that he had occasionally displaced one coffin in order to make room for a deep grave at its side. That the ground, when opened, is apt to exhale offensive effluvia, especially in warm damp weather, is proved by the testimony of various persons. The Rev. Mr. Le Breton, Curate of St. Olave's, states that on one or two occasions he has been much annoyed, and that, in consequence, he always makes a point of standing on the windward side of a grave. Several of the residents in Potter's-fields complain of foul smells from it, especially of late, when many of the burials took place near to their houses; and Mr. Viner, surgeon, of 114, Tooley-street, mentioned to me that one of the gravediggers (Kennedy by name), whose family he attends professionally, has more than once admitted to him that the stench from a grave, even within a foot or two of the surface, has been sometimes so disgusting as to occasion headache and vertigo; also that he was continually exposing coffins when digging to any depth."

St. Saviour's, Southwark.—"Situation altogether most unsuitable, lying low, with dwellings overlooking it, and with the Borough Provision Market in its immediate neighbourhood; extent considerably less than half an acre; has been used for the purposes of interment for several centuries; always necessary to search the ground with the borer before beginning to dig a grave. This churchyard appears to be attended to with more care than most of the metropolitan burial-grounds, in consequence of the sexton having for the last 20 years made a plan or chart of the ground, and kept a regular registry of the

exact situation of every grave, and the number of coffins deposited in each."

St. George's Lutheran Church, Whitechapel.—"I am informed, by good authority, that to such a degree was this small graveyard crowded with corpses 30 years ago, that even then it was deemed requisite by the incumbent of the church that it should be closed. 'So far, however, from this being done,' my informant goes on to state, 'it is a fact that since that time more bodies have been interred there annually than before.' Several of the inmates in the houses overlooking this graveyard complain of most offensive smells from it, especially in hot weather, and whenever the ground has been opened for interment. The health of these persons has, in the opinion of their medical attendants, seriously suffered in consequence; and, in one instance, the physician insisted upon the removal of the family from their residence."

St. Botolph's Churchyard, Aldgate.—"It is closely hemmed in on the east by the houses in Church-passage, the walls of the houses forming the boundary of the ground on this side; on the east and north it is enclosed by Church-row, on the west by Houndsditch, and on the south by High-street, Aldgate. It has been long notorious that this churchyard is exceedingly full of human remains, and that it ought to have been entirely closed many years ago. The shocking catastrophe which occured in 1841, when two men lost their lives in a grave from the poisonous exhalations issuing into it from the mass of festering corruption at the side, induced many of the parishioners and others to raise a sum of money for the purchase of a piece of ground at Bow as a cemetery. The average annual number of burials in this churchyard for the last few years has been about 100; ten or fifteen years ago it was as high as between 300 and 400.

"During the present year the number interred up to September 8th, when the ground was closed by order of the churchwardens, was 56. Since that date no burial has taken place in the churchyard, and only one in the vaults under the church. I should mention that the floor of the vaults has been much used as a common graveyard, graves being dug there as in the open ground, and ordinary wooden coffins deposited in them, up to within a foot or two of the surface. At one part of the vaults the level of the ground has become considerably raised by the number of interments that have taken place beneath."

St. Olave, Silver-street, Falcon-square.—"The churchyard is of very small dimensions, and it is closely hemmed in on three sides by houses and other buildings. It is very old ground, having been used for interments since, and indeed before, the great fire of London. The residents in the houses which directly overlook the churchyard concur in stating that they have often experienced the most foul and offensive effluvia from it, especially after damp hot weather, or when a grave has been dug. The effect upon several persons has been to produce nausea and tendency to syncope. The stench was more than usually powerful on Monday, the 16th September, upon occasion of the last funeral."

Tavistock Burial-ground, Drury-lane.—"Has been long known to be entirely occupied in every part with human remains. Fourteen years ago it was closed in consequence of its overcrowded and very

offensive state; but it was again opened two or three years afterwards, and it has continued to be used ever since. The number of interments that have taken place here for the three years ending 31st of December, 1848, amounts to upwards of 500, and already in the present year 127 bodies have been added to this overcharged mass of corruption. The ground, according to the statement of the sexton, often feels quite greasy to the finger, and he acknowledges that he has frequently perceived a most offensive effluvium from it, especially in hot damp weather. Many of the residents in the houses overlooking the graveyard, which is closely hemmed in by dwellings, state that they have often been obliged to shut their windows in consequence of the stench."

Spa-fields Burying-ground.—"Five-sixths at least of this graveyard was closed against interments four years ago by order of the Queen's Bench, in consequence of the overcrowded state of the ground and the complaints of the inhabitants of the neighbourhood. Since that period an additional portion of the ground, which appears to have been formerly occupied as a garden to the house of the sexton, has been taken in for the purpose of interments; but the greater part of this also is, by his own acknowledgment, quite full. In the course of last year (1848) 500 burials took place; and already, since the beginning of July last to the present date, September 8, 1849, no fewer than 176 have occurred. Eight graves were open when I visited the ground for funerals to-morrow. This burial-ground is surrounded on all sides by dwellings; it is constantly complained of by the residents in these houses; the locality is notorious for fever, and several fatal cases of cholera have occurred there within the last few days."

St. Giles's-in-the-Fields.—"In order to get rid of the bones it has been the practice in this graveyard to dig a wide and very deep pit, into which they are cast until it becomes nearly full: it is then covered over with sod, and another pit is made to receive a like accumulation. This fact alone suffices to show how saturated the ground must have been, over and over again, with human remains; nor can we be surprised at this, considering that this churchyard is one of the very oldest in London, having originally been used as a burial-place for the lepers in London. No spot for interment can ever be discovered except by boring."

St. Giles's Cemetery, Old St. Pancras-road.—On the 19th of October, a memorial was addressed to the General Board respecting this burial-ground, by Mr. Alexander Marshall, 49, Broad-street, Bloomsbury. In this memorial occurs the following statement:—

"The ground is only about 4 acres; about 2 acres are occupied by private family graves, 1 acre of which is called maiden or unused ground. The remaining acre is crowded to a shameful and very dangerous degree. Practices of a most revolting nature are constantly used. Deep pits are left open until filled up within two or three inches of the surface. The bodies are placed one upon the other without a particle of earth between them, and I have seen the most offensive greenish discharge running from the bodies.

"Upon questioning the gravedigger, who has been in office for the last 11 years," says Dr. Milroy, "I learned the following particulars as to the

manner in which pauper interments take place in this ground: A pit, or what is called a 'double grave,' is always dug, and is kept open (boards only being laid over the mouth) until it is filled with the due number of coffins, and then it is closed up with earth. A grave of this sort will hold, if it be 14 feet deep, about 18 adult coffins, and of course many more of children. The next grave is opened close alongside of the one just filled up, with no space of earth left between; consequently the pile of coffins in the latter one is very generally exposed in the act of digging the new grave. This is what is technically called 'working the ground very close.' There was no double grave open at the time of my visit; only a single or common one. It was 10 or 12 feet in depth, and was prepared for a burial that was to take place on the morrow. At the bottom of the grave was an exposed coffin which had been interred there seven weeks before. Upon asking the gravedigger if he always dug down until he came to the coffin last deposited, he answered 'Yes, in order to make as much of the ground as possible.' This cemetery is bounded on the west by a row of dwellings called Cooke's-row and Eve's-place, on the east by Agar Town, on the north by the buildings of the St. Pancras workhouse, and on the south by the churchyard of Old St. Pancras. It was consecrated in 1803. The soil throughout consists of a stiff tenacious clay, in which decomposition goes on very slowly. I wrote to Mr. Robinson, the surgeon of the St. Pancras Infirmary, to learn if the inmates had ever perceived foul effluvia from the burial-ground. His reply was as follows: 'You have put some questions to me respecting the effect of the burials in the graveyard of St. Giles's upon the inmates of the buildings adjoining, some of which have been appropriated to the sick. As you have visited the spot, I need not describe these buildings. It will suffice to state that in *all* of them complaints have occasionally been made of unpleasant effluvia, more particularly in that portion which was originally applied to the men's infirmary. Its basement story however during the past summer has been empty, and only during the last three weeks, owing to the crowded state of the female infirmary, has been temporarily occupied. On Friday week last (26th October, 1849) some of the inmates complained dreadfully of the odour from the burial-ground, and saw the gravediggers removing the coffins from their graves. From that period to Thursday last (1st November, 1849) the smell was so offensive that I was compelled to remove the parties altogether from the building.'"

CHRIST-CHURCH, BROADWAY, WESTMINSTER.—"From all accounts it appears that it has been full to repletion for a great length of time, and the general surprise is how room can still be found for the continual additions of coffins that are put into it. The Rev. Mr. James, who has been curate of St. Margaret's, Westminster, for the last 18 years, and who has performed the funeral-service upon most occasions in Christ-Church burial-ground, expressly states that it should have been closed long ago; as it is well known that there is no space which is not fully occupied. He has repeatedly experienced the most disgusting smells from the open graves, and he invariably makes a point of standing on their windward side to avoid as much as possible the foul exhalations. He has seen as many as eight coffins exposed in one grave;

and when I mentioned to him that a person had informed me that he had on one occasion witnessed no fewer than sixteen coffins so exposed, viz. four on each side and four at each end of the grave, Mr. James assured me that he could quite believe the statement. The testimony of the Rev. Mr. Cook, the other curate, was in accordance with that of Mr. James, and both gentlemen mentioned that the Rector of the parish, the Rev. Mr. Milman, had expressed his opinion publicly to the same effect, viz. that the ground should have been closed long before. The sexton stated that, when he entered upon his office three years ago, the churchwardens told him that the ground then was quite full, and that they must endeavour to find another place for burials. Yet ever since that time no fewer than six hundred bodies have been annually interred in it, even although a very considerable portion of its area—nearly one quarter I believe—has for the last two years been entirely unused for sepulture, having been given up for the purpose of being taken into the new line of street now forming in Westminster. Of late the burials have been more numerous than ever. Nearly 140 have taken place during the last four weeks; and the large majority of these have been made in a very small space of the ground, probably not exceeding 40 or 50 feet square. As many as six or seven coffins have, I was told, been put into one grave; the uppermost coffin being not more than 2 or 3 feet, if so much, from the surface. Several of the inhabitants of houses overlooking the burial-ground have been much annoyed, especially during the last few months, with offensive effluvia which they feel assured proceed from it."

St. Andrew-by-the-Wardrobe.—"This is the first occasion on which I have examined a subterranean graveyard; for it is to be understood that, in the case of the vaults of this church, the great majority of the burials have taken place, not by merely depositing lead-lined coffins on the floor, but by regularly digging graves in this floor, and conducting the work in the usual way of interment in an open burial-ground. During the last 10 years about 150 interments have been made in the two vaults, the one of which is 66 feet long by 11 wide, and the other is 17 long and 13 wide. The ground requires to be always searched with the borer before it can be opened; and the number of bones strewed upon the surface of this dark charnel-house attests the crowding of the corpses below.* As many as seven or eight coffins have been placed in one grave of 12 or 13 feet in depth. Of course, the exposure of coffins at the sides, as well as at the bottom of a grave, is a frequent occurrence here."

St. Clement Danes, Portugal-street.—"From the concurrent testimony of the occupants of all the houses which overlook the ground, it appears to me undeniable that, for some years past, there have been perceived occasionally exhalations of mephitic effluvia, especially when the wind set in particular directions, or when the weather was close and warm before rain. They were always observed to be most offensive whenever the ground had been opened. The inmates of King's

* A few years ago the quantity of human bones and pieces of coffin was so large that the churchwardens had them collected together at the closed end of the smaller vault, which was then bricked up about midway between this end and its entrance. The vault originally was about 30 feet in length.

College Hospital, in Carey-street, and of the houses in Portugal-street and St. Clement's-lane, have often been obliged to shut their windows, to keep out the intolerable stench that sets in upon them. Mr. Smith, house-surgeon of the hospital, states that he has frequently of late had attacks of nausea and vertigo, which he attributes to the effluvia from the graveyard. The same effects have been experienced by many of the patients in the hospital, and also of the residents in the houses in St. Clement's-lane. The case of the latter persons is especially deserving of attention; several of them have but one room for their dwelling, and the window of that room, looking out upon the burial-ground, sometimes cannot be opened for an entire day, in consequence of the horrible effluvia with which the atmosphere is charged. A very intelligent and respectable woman living in Portugal-street informed me that she had been obliged to change her bed-room and the nursery of her children from the back to the front of the house to escape the fœtid exhalations. She particularly specified one occasion on which they were more than usually disgusting, and she had made a short memorandum of it at the time. The facts were these:—A grave was opened on the 29th of June last (1849), and a body interred therein; another body was put into the same grave on the 1st of July, a third on the 8th, and a fourth on the 15th. I should have mentioned that the back wall of a labouring man's dwelling, on the ground-floor of No. 35, Clement's-lane, forms part of the boundary of the burial-ground on the west side. A few years ago there was a window in this wall looking out upon the ground, but, in consequence of the gradual elevation of the soil, from the constantly increasing accumulation of coffin upon coffin, he was obliged to brick up the window and make a skylight to the room, the floor of which is now about six feet below the surface of the graveyard. The wall distinctly bulges in from the pressure of the incumbent earth. About six months ago it began to crack in several places; a small portion of the brickwork gave way, and earth containing some fragments of human bones fell in. Offensive as the exhalations from this burial-ground have been on various former occasions, it would seem, from the unanimous testimony of all the witnesses I questioned, that never were they so horribly disgusting as on Tuesday last, 28th August, when a very deep grave had been dug, about the centre (I believe) of the ground. A large quantity of bones was exhumed; Mr. Smith ascertained by a careful inspection of them that the remains of at least ten different skeletons were thrown up. One or two of the skulls presented the appearance of comparatively recent interment, all the teeth being entire, and the bones exhibiting the aspect of still retaining a portion of their gelatine. The fœtor upon this occasion was so overpowering, that even the beadle of the parish acknowledged that it was very bad. Not a window facing the graveyard could be opened, notwithstanding the oppressive heat of the day. Some of the residents were obliged to leave their houses for a time; persons passing along Portugal-street held their nostrils; a policeman standing at the door of King's College Hospital was seized with vomiting; and one of the physicians of this institution, who approached the open grave, was suddenly seized with giddiness, and would have fallen down if he had not been supported by another gentleman. Although the ground in this graveyard thus appears to be so saturated with corruption that it

cannot be moved without giving forth pernicious emanations, I was informed by the beadle that three or four burials at least take place there every week. It is altogether horrible to think of these continual additions to the already enormous mass of festering decay, and this too in the midst of the dwellings of the living!"

BURIAL-GROUNDS OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW THE GREAT.—"These burial-grounds are four in number, situated on the west, the south, the north, and the north-east sides of the church, to which they immediately adjoin. They are closely hemmed in by dwellings, and, taken all together, they are among the very worst of the many bad graveyards in the city.

"1. The west or front ground is the chief one. It is considerably larger than the other three, although it does not contain above 500 square yards of superficial area. It is enclosed on two sides by the rears of the houses in Cloth-fair. Some of these houses have the privilege of having a door leading directly into the graveyard; but it is not very obvious for what purpose this privilege was granted, except that the residents might be able to use it as a substitute for a back yard, where they might deposit any spare lumber. I was informed that a small sum has been paid for the benefit of this privilege. Another person stated to me that some of the owners of the houses had been permitted for a 'consideration' to encroach upon the burial-ground. In one corner there were standing some old dilapidated furniture, an empty tar-barrel, and a quantity of rusty iron utensils. The surface of the ground I found to be strewed with fragments of human bones, intermingled with fish and fowl bones that had been thrown out of the windows, dead rats, and other refuse. The inhabitants in the overlooking houses are apt, the sexton said, to empty their basins out upon the ground, when there is no one there to prevent them.

"Graves are occasionally dug close up to the very walls and windows of the houses; and the effluvia from the ground when opened are declared to be often most offensive. The graves have sometimes been so shallow that not above 18 inches, or a couple of feet at most, have been left between the top of the coffin and the ordinary surface of the ground.

"2. The second, or green ground, is situated on the south side of the church. It is not above a third of the size of the former one, and is altogether in a still worse and more discreditable condition. It looks indeed much more like a dust and rubbish yard than a place for the interment of human beings. In one corner stood a large heap of ashes at the side of a privy; in another there was a quantity of old bricks and mortar; in a third there was an unclosed grave, which, although it had already received five or six coffins, was only covered over with a few boards, and some handfuls of earth strewed upon them, and was therefore ready to receive more coffins before being entirely shut; while in the remaining corner, over a comparatively recent grave, was to be seen a neatly-kept little mound carefully hooped over to keep the earth together, and presenting a sad and painful spectacle, by the very contrast of its decency to the grossly neglected state of the rest of this ground.

"3. But of all the graveyards the north one is immeasurably the worst in every respect. A person can scarcely believe that it could ever have

been used as a place of sepulture. It forms a long narrow strip, not above 10 or 12 feet in width, between the walls of the church on one side, and the rears of some old dirty houses in Cloth-fair, which in some parts overhang the ground, on the other. To a stranger it has all the appearance of a filthy back-yard common to several low and filthy houses. The surface is strewed with cabbage-leaves, parings of turnips, fish-bones, and other sorts of rubbish, with large splashes of filthy water that had been recently emptied from some adjacent window. There is a large pile of hen-coops at one end, and a couple of dog-kennels at another part. Upon inquiring to whom they belonged, the schoolmaster of the parochial schools informed me that they were his property, adding that the management of the ground had been left by the churchwardens in his hands for the last three or four years, and that he made use of it as a convenient place to keep his fowls in. At the present season of the year, he said, it did not look nice; but in summer the grass grew quite beautifully! Before his time, the graveyard, he told me, was in a horrible state, and not fit to be entered by any one, being ankle-deep in many places with excrement which had been thrown out from the houses in Cloth-fair, and no better than a common dungyard. Yet then, or at least not very long before, it was the pauper burial-ground for the parish; and that multitudes of human corpses have been thrust into it is sufficiently evident from the great rising of the ground, by many feet above the level of the adjacent court. It must indeed have been a shocking spectacle to have witnessed the mockery of a Christian funeral here. No one would bury a favourite dog in such a spot. Taken altogether, I have not seen anything called a graveyard so thoroughly disgusting and so revolting to every sentiment of common decency, not to mention religion, as this ground; nor did I ever leave a place where I knew that my fellow-creatures had been laid with feelings of such indignant regret."

We add the two following descriptions from Dr. Milroy, in order to direct attention to the inconceivable abomination stated in the sentences in italics.

Burial-ground, Wade-street, All Saints, Poplar.—"Full of human remains. Many of the residents in Wade-street, which forms the western boundary of the graveyard, complain of offensive effluvia from the ground, especially when the graves are dug close to the wall: that is, nearest to their dwellings. The officiating clergyman, the Rev. James Hearsnep, admitted that these foul smells were often perceptible from the open graves in this situation; but stated that, in his opinion, the smells were attributable not so much to the decomposition of the bodies that were therein deposited, *as to the escape underneath the intervening wall of the contents of the privies of those houses into the graves.* He himself had good reason to suspect that this had been the case on more than one occasion."

Burial-ground of St. James's Chapel, Hampstead-road.—"Is between three and four acres in extent; has been used as a place of sepulture for the last 60 years; is enclosed on three sides by dwellings; the average number of burials has, for many years, exceeded 700 per annum—previously it was still greater, amounting to nearly 1000. In the present year the number up to the 30th of September has been 693,

of which more than one half (364) took place in the course of the last three months. The general character of the soil in this ground is wet and clayey; in some parts of it a grave cannot be dug to three or four feet in depth before there is a pool of water at the bottom; the consequence is that the decomposition of the bodies goes on very slowly, and hence it has happened on many occasions that, when the ground has been opened near to the place of a recent interment, not only foul gas, but also putrid water, has entered the grave from the side and obliged the gravediggers to leave it for a time. Both gravediggers admitted that they had often been obliged to come out of the graves they were digging from this cause; both men have been laid up with severe illness, which they attribute to the same cause; one of them was confined to the house, some time ago, for upwards of a fortnight, from a severe bowel complaint, which attacked him suddenly while engaged in digging a grave where the above occurrence took place. It appears, also, that many of the residents in the houses in Little George-street, which bounds the burial-ground on the south side, have been much annoyed with offensive effluvia whenever a grave in which an interment had already been made was opened near their dwellings. Some have removed elsewhere in consequence. As many as six bodies have been deposited in a grave of 10 or 11 feet in depth. In one corner of the ground there have been interred, within the last three or four years, nearly 400 bodies, packed as close as the coffins can be made to lie; and *within the present year graves have begun to be dug under the foundation of the south wall, so that the contents of the privies in the houses in Little George-street have been known to find their way into them.*"

Mr. Ranger thus reports of some of the metropolitan burial-grounds examined by him:—

New Bunhill-fields Cemetery, Church-street, Islington.—"From the best information I could obtain, the ground (which is private property) has been in use for sepulture about 40 years: it is surrounded on all sides by dwellings. The stratum is clay, and the number of burials average from 20 to 35 per week, and as many as 13 bodies are deposited in a single grave. One witness states, that such has been the nearness to the surface at which bodies have been laid, that he has kicked against the coffins whilst walking, and, upon complaining of the circumstance to the proprietors, they have ordered the digger to mound up the graves. He has known graves with one or more coffins deposited therein kept open for 9 or 10 days (it is supposed to save the cost for re-opening the ground), and in one of the graves directly under the back windows of his house he has seen as many as 13 bodies deposited within a period of 10 days. That it is frequently the practice to disinter coffins to make room for others, and after the mourners have left the grave the disinterred coffin has been replaced upon that which had just been buried, a surreptitious mode of gaining depth to the eye of the parties attending. And during the dark nights, between the hours of 12 and 3 A.M., he is in the habit of hearing the sound of work in various parts of the ground, and a light moving about; but during moonlight nights nothing of the kind is heard. The practice of disinterring coffins was also spoken to by other witnesses."

BURIAL-GROUND, BUTLER'S-PLACE, HORSLEYDOWN.—"The estimated area of the ground is 1440 square yards, and is entirely surrounded by houses, closely packed and densely peopled; with New Church-grove, Saint John's-place, and Victoria-grove impinging thereon, and rendered *culs-de-sac* by the works of the South-Eastern Railway. No part of this ground has ever been consecrated; a schoolmaster residing in the neighbourhood taking upon himself the duty of reading the burial-service. The number of burials is estimated at an average of 260 per annum. Assuming the ground to have been in use only 25 years, it follows that the number of burials for that period must have amounted to 6250; that is in the proportion of 15 bodies in each grave, or in the ratio of 7800 per acre in 10 years.

"In one corner of this ground a vault has been made and a communication opened with the basement, properly the cellars to several dwelling-houses; in this place human remains in ordinary coffins are deposited.

"It seems that the proprietor, who is an undertaker, is sole manager of one or more burial societies, the members thereof paying a weekly or monthly sum in advance, and in the event of death, having paid the amount required, they are entitled to be interred in this ground, or in the vaults upon an additional payment of one guinea, extra leaden coffins not being insisted on.

"The emanations, upon entering the vaults and cellar, I found particularly offensive, and the miasma arising from the premises is described by Mr. Russel, the medical officer, as the means of engendering disease in this locality to an alarming extent; it not having been free from disease for a long period, whilst it has furnished some of the worst cases of cholera, 21 in number, together with a vast amount of diarrhœa, consisting of no less than 100 cases. Two persons residing in one of the houses over the cellar, containing human remains in ordinary coffins, fell victims to cholera: one, a child who died in a few hours; the other the father, who only survived two days. The general appearance of the occupiers of these houses is most distressing."

COLLIER'S-RENTS, CHAPEL, BOROUGH.—"Is situated in a densely peopled district, the walls of houses forming the enclosure. The basement or cellar, with open space at back of chapel, constitute an area of about 4885 superficial feet, and have been converted into two distinct graveyards. The number of interments since 1844, including the remains deposited in the recesses on each side of the cellar, amount to 1341. Upon examination I found coffins, &c., at depths varying from 3 feet to 1 foot below the surface, which was nothing more than dust. The window of this cellar opens on the public street."

ST. STEPHEN, WALBROOK.—"The area of this burial-ground is estimated at 306 square yards, and is closely surrounded on the south and east sides by the counting-houses of Messrs. Rothschild, with basements; on the north by dwelling-houses and offices; on the west by a narrow passage at the back of the Mansion-house; and on the north by the church. The strata consist of a dark-coloured soil, from 4 feet to 5 feet deep, overlying a stratum of loamy soil, 9 to 10 feet, resting upon sand from 6 inches to 1 foot thick; under the last is a deep stratum of marl. The registry is dated 1563. Within the last three months, that is, August, September, and October, 45 burials have taken place, whilst the total number recorded amounts to 4002; which

is equivalent to 18 layers of bodies in each grave: hence the entire area has been dug over for graves no less than 13 times; and its present surface, from the increments of human remains, is 2 feet 9 inches above the surface of the passage, and in some parts above the level of the floor in the church. It seems from the evidence of the digger that common graves have not been confined to the churchyard, as it has been the practice to make similar graves within the walls of the church, and the pavement as a consequence is very uneven in parts, a circumstance, there is no doubt, ascribable to the decay of the coffins. This fact will sufficiently account for the unpleasant sensation experienced by the inhabitants during their attendance at Divine Service: some complain of constant headache produced by the smell, and others state that they have been obliged altogether to give up attending the church on account of it. Mr. Whistler (churchwarden of St. Bennett Sherehog) stated that about 4 years ago the condition of the burial-ground was such that the Rev. Mr. Brandram, in officiating at a funeral, observed it was with the greatest difficulty he could perform the service, in consequence of the effluvium from the opened grave."

From the reports of Mr. Bowie we cite the following statements as examples of the condition of some of the metropolitan burial-grounds which have been examined by him:—

Barking Churchyard, Great Tower-street, City.—"Closely surrounded on all sides by habitations; densely packed with dead bodies. The effluvia from the ground are so offensive, that the inhabitants of the adjoining houses are frequently obliged to close their doors and windows; the smell is strongest when a grave is opened for a fresh interment, but in warm damp weather it is always offensive. One witness says, 'Whenever a grave is opened for a funeral, the stench is overpowering. We are obliged to keep the windows closely shut down.' Some time ago, when a grave was opened for the removal of the bodies of two children, the stench was so dreadful, that, although every precaution was taken to keep the windows closely shut, it made myself and my daughter very sick and otherwise ill.' Another witness stated that 'the smell in warm weather was extremely unpleasant.' Mrs. S——, residing at No. 1, says that, when graves or vaults are opened, the smell is so exceedingly offensive as to have caused her to lose several lodgers; all her family have been ill, and she herself is in bad health, owing, as she believes, to want of air and the smells from this churchyard.

"The basement of the Tower Shades, Trinity-square, lies about 10 or 11 feet below the elevation of Barking churchyard, from which it is separated by a passage about 8 feet wide, paved with flag-stones. The smell here was so extremely powerful and offensive, that I was induced to examine the place minutely, when I discovered several holes in the drain, evidently made by rats, and from the peculiarity of the smell I feel assured that the churchyard was contributing its full share to the noxious compound."

Pauper Graveyard of St. Bride's, Fleet-street.—"This graveyard is bounded on the north by Stonecutter-street, leading to Shoe-lane from Farringdon-street; on the south by Harp-alley, separating it from Poppin's and Black Horse courts, Fleet-street; on the east

by Farringdon-street; and on the west by Shoe-lane. It is thus hemmed in on all sides by houses thickly peopled. Numerous and earnest were the complaints made to me against this burial-ground. One witness, residing in Stonecutter-street, stated to me as follows:—'Believes this ground has been used as a burial-place ever since the time of the plague. Thirty years ago it was a question whether it was not quite full; nevertheless, burials averaging about 100 annually have continued to take place ever since, until about three months ago; that is, three months since May, 1849. At that time a very great mortality took place, chiefly among children, in this immediate neighbourhood; and on this account the parish authorities of their own accord ordered burying to be discontinued. The smells from this graveyard are often extremely bad; typhus fever has been in her own family three times within eight years; has also lost a child from water on the brain.'

"This evidence, as I have stated, was taken in May last (1849). A few weeks afterwards I was informed that a fatal case of cholera had occurred in the very house in which this witness lived. On inquiry I found that the victim was this witness herself. She died on the 27th June. On questioning her husband he told me that 'a few days prior to this event an awful smell pervaded the house, and that during this time his wife was seized with the cholera.' He further stated that 'there had been a great deal of illness in his family, owing, as he believed, to the bad smells from the burial-ground; that the last bodies buried were only three feet from the surface, and were just above a barrel-drain only seven feet deep; and that he was always obliged to keep the windows shut when the wind blew from the south.'

"It is notorious that the smells from the drains and sewers in this neighbourhood are most offensive. I have myself perceived in them much of that sickening odour peculiar to animal substances undergoing putrefaction. The amount of disease in this neighbourhood, the numerous deaths that have taken place from fever and the ravages of cholera, are indisputable proofs of the unhealthiness of the locality, to which I am convinced the state of this churchyard contributes a large share."

St. Andrew's Churchyard, Holborn.—"While inspecting a house in Robin Hood-court I was struck with the appearance of a wall, which was damp, glutinous, and spongy, with the lime bulging from the interstices or junctions of the bricks. That it was not considered very safe, was evident from its being supported by two transverse beams resting upon the house itself. I recognised at once the cause of its dirty state when I beheld from a window the burial-ground immediately behind it, and learned how densely packed it is with dead bodies. Here again I distinctly perceived the usual churchyard fœtor from the drains. Two graves, I was informed, were always kept open for the reception of the bodies of paupers, and were never covered in until thought sufficiently full. I saw those graves myself. The residents in the neighbourhood complained bitterly of the smells proceeding from them, and the general account I heard was—'There has been a great deal of sickness here.'"

Trinity Burying-ground, Fetter-lane.—"There is a little court off Fetter-lane, called Mac's-place, in Greystoke-place. It contains about eight houses, badly ventilated, most imperfectly drained, wretch-

edly supplied with water, and contaminated with hoarded night-soil in ill-cleansed conveniences. On its south side is the burying-ground, adding its unmistakeable odour to the other abominations. I received the following statements from the inhabitants:—

"'A boy died 14 months ago with all the symptoms of cholera. He had been cleaning away the dirt in the room, which smelt very bad, just before he was seized. About the same time four children in the court died of fever.'

"Another witness, living on the side next the graveyard, stated—

"'The house smells so bad it is almost impossible to live in it.' The smell he compares to that of a dead cat—not an inapt comparison, for certainly it was that of carrion. He adds that 'the graveyard often smells intolerably, and that the water is shockingly bad, tasting as if they were drinking something putrefied, and often containing worms alive and more than an inch long.'

"In several of the houses which I examined the inhabitants made loud complaints, and stated that there had been a great deal of fever in the court within the last 12 or 14 months. I saw one woman who had just recovered from diarrhœa. She told me that her two children were still suffering from that disorder. Several others rather reluctantly confessed that 'they had been similarly affected a short time ago.' The whole place might well be termed a 'fever-nest.'"

Wycliff Burying-ground, Commercial-road East.—"This is a burying-ground near the London Hospital. It is described as being very much crowded. A few years ago I myself attended a funeral there. The smell was so intolerable that I could scarcely endure it. The earth was obviously saturated with decaying animal matter. On my return home I had to change my boots, they smelt so disagreeably. In a family residing in a house in Bedford-square, the windows of which look into this churchyard, and in which house I had myself often perceived the unmistakeable smell coming from the churchyard, malignant scarlet fever broke out, and one of the children died. My brother was a great deal in the room with the child that died. He also was seized with ulcerated sore throat and fever of a typhoid character, and was for upwards of a fortnight in the greatest danger. While visiting the child at his request I was sensible of a peculiar odour in the room, and remember saying to him, 'I shall think myself fortunate if I escape a fit of sickness after that smell, for I have never yet been sensible of it without suffering.' Next day I got my clothes rather wet whilst out, and the day following was in my bed with sore throat and fever, and was confined to my room for several days. This was about the time that Dr. Lynch and several other medical men died of a similar disease."

Vaults of the Metropolitan Churches.—We have thought it desirable to direct inquiry to be made into the practice of burial in vaults, as far as relates to the vaults of the metropolitan churches. The following extracts from the Report of Dr. Waller Lewis will convey some conception of the actual state of these subterranean places of burial, and of the effects upon the health of the living of this mode of sepulture:—

"My investigations have not yet extended so far as I hoped would have been the case; but the very foul state of the atmosphere contained in the greater number of the vaults has had so depressing an effect upon my health, that it became quite impossible to venture on a repetition of inhaling the poisoned air till some of the effects of the previous visit had disappeared. Such has been its effect upon me, that I have never been able to make more than two descents in a week.

"The symptoms I have more particularly experienced during my investigations, and such as I have not been accustomed to, are the following:—

"General languor and depression of the system, with disinclination to the slightest exertion; a constant feeling of sickness, which requires two or three days' absence from the vaults to dissipate entirely; complete loss of appetite, and a disrelish for all articles of food except cold water; a mawkish, flat taste in the mouth always present, and overcoming the flavour of whatever is eaten, even of the most sapid substances; and an earthy smell, much resembling that so constantly given off by patients in the last stage of cholera.

"These symptoms continue for a longer or shorter period according as my visit to the vault has been more or less prolonged, and as the vault has been ill or well ventilated.

"The two gentlemen who have assisted me in the operative part of my researches have experienced the same symptoms, more or less, sometimes feeling so faint as to be obliged to leave the vault and go into the open air immediately.

"In some cases where the churchwardens or other officers accompanied me, they have complained of nausea after a very short sojourn among the coffins.

"The following is a list of the churches the vaults of which I have visited:—

"St. Martin's-in-the-Fields; St. Margaret's, Westminster; St. George, Bayswater-road; St. Andrew Undershaft, Leadenhall-street; St. Bride's, Fleet-street; St. Mary Woolnoth, Lombard-street; St. Dionis Back Church, Fenchurch-street; St. Bennet's, Gracechurch; St. Mary-at-Hill; St. Peter's, Cornhill; St. Mary-le-Bow, Cheapside; St. Mary-le-Strand; St. Clement Danes; and St. Mildred's in the Poultry, where, however, I did not succeed in gaining admission.

"I append to this General Report a detailed account of the state of the vaults under these churches, with evidence of the clergy, churchwardens, or sextons of each.

"The objects of inquiry that I more particularly proposed to myself were the following:—The state of the vault as to order and decency; the state of the atmosphere therein; the number of coffins in the vault, whether of lead or of wood only; the condition of the coffins as to soundness, &c.; whether all the coffins placed in the vault at different times were still there, or whether any had been removed; what time was required for the entire decomposition of the body in leaden and in wooden coffins; what are the gaseous, fluid, and solid results of the decomposition; what is the effect of the process and results of the decomposition on the coffins.

"I am much indebted to the Rev. Charles Marshall, Vicar of St. Bride's, Fleet-street, for his kind assistance in calling with me upon several of the clergy, the vaults of whose churches I wished to visit; and, generally, I have met with the hearty co-operation of the clergy

and churchwardens of the different parishes. In the few cases where obstructions and impediments have been thrown in my way on frivolous pretexts, I have had reason to believe, from the strictest inquiries, that the vaults were in a state unfit to be seen.

"In most instances, especially in the City, I have found that all the higher authorities are fully aware of the evils resulting from the practice of interments in vaults. I have met with a particularly gratifying instance of the efforts sometimes spontaneously made on their part to put an end to this practice, in the course recently taken by the Vestry and Rector of St. Dionis Back Church, Fenchurch-street.

"In the chemical investigations of the gases and other substances requiring accurate analyses, I have been kindly assisted by J. M. Ashley, Esq., Professor of Chemistry to the Royal Polytechnic Institution.

"The vaults I have visited up to the present time are generally in a very disgraceful condition. Those least so are St. Martin's-in-the-Fields; St. Bride's, Fleet-street; and St. Mary-le-Bow. That of St. Mary-at-Hill is in a condition that is a disgrace to any civilized nation. Here are placed some hundred and fifty coffins, in all possible positions, piled one above another—the lower crushed by the weight of those above. The great majority are broken and decayed—the remnants of mortality falling out between the rows of coffins. In all but the newest coffins the external wood is decayed, leaving the lead exposed. It is, of course, impossible, in these instances, to ascertain whose remains they contain. Enormous cobwebs and fungi, with much dirt and filth, render the inscriptions that remain illegible. Many of the coffins consist of a mere shell of decayed wood, which, on the slightest touch, breaks into powder and exposes the remains of the skeleton. The coffins are so fragile, and the piles so much out of the perpendicular, that it is dangerous to approach very near them. In the two farther corners large collections of bones are piled together without any attempt at order or decency—a most revolting sight. The churchwarden was not aware, it appears, of the condition of the vault. The vault is not ventilated, and the odour of decomposing flesh is extremely foul.

"After remaining about an hour in this vault, I was much oppressed by sickness, and an attack of diarrhœa followed, which lasted about 24 hours. I believe that the practice of interment in this vault is still pursued.

"The atmosphere in the vault of St. Peter's, Cornhill, was very foul and offensive, even after fresh air had been admitted during the previous 24 hours, without which, the churchwarden assured me, it would not be safe to venture down.

"On some frivolous excuse I was refused admittance to the vaults of St. Mildred, in the Poultry; but the sextoness, Mrs. Knipe, said that 'no one ever dared to enter the vault till the large trap-door had been raised for many hours.'

"The vaults of St. Dionis Back Church are in a very bad condition. Being ill ventilated, nearly all the external wooden cases have rotted away, and, where lead has been used, the metal is thus exposed to view. Where wood only has been employed, as is the case with many of the coffins, and when these are piled one on the other, they are crushed and broken, and the bones, in all stages of decay, are exposed to sight.

In the north vault of this church, as was the case at St. Mary-at-Hill, there is a large collection of bones heaped together in the west corner, without any attempt to cover or conceal them. The state of the south vault is still worse. In one spot 13 coffins are piled one on the other, many of them broken and crushed; the bones from the broken upper coffins dropping down among those of the lower, and mixing with them in all stages of decay, are most revolting to the senses of smell and vision. Much organic fluid finds its way through the different coffins, and causes a very unwholesome effluvium.

"The floor of the vault of St. Mary-le-Strand is covered some inches deep with broken coffin-wood and fragments of bones.

"The atmosphere in the vault of St. Andrew Undershaft was very injurious both to myself and the gentlemen who assisted me.

"In the vaults of St. George's burial-ground, in the Bayswater-road, there are 1180 coffins. This is the only place where a perfect registry of all the burials has been kept; but this vault is only of recent date comparatively: the first burial took place in 1771. Except between the high rows of coffins, the atmosphere is not so foul as in the older vaults.

"The two circumstances that influence most powerfully the condition of the vaults, are—

"1. The state of ventilation.

"2. The construction of the coffins.

"When the vault is not perfectly ventilated by a powerful current of air, the atmosphere is strongly impregnated with decaying animal matter, carbonic acid gas, nitrogen, and sometimes with ammonia. In some ill-ventilated vaults hydrochloric acid forms dense white fumes of hydrochlorate of ammonia when exposed on a watch-glass. Candles do not burn with their accustomed brilliancy, and more or less oppression of the chest and difficulty of breathing are experienced.

"I have not been able to discover any traces of sulphuretted, phosphuretted, or carburetted hydrogen.

"But the most curious circumstance is, that the state of preservation of the external wooden cases of the coffins bears a direct proportion to the perfection of the ventilation. Wherever there is no current of air, the wood is always found to have crumbled into a dark brown powder, which falls down and collects in heaps at the bottom of the piles, leaving the lead exposed. Where no lead has been used, the same action ensues; but in this case the remains of the corpse become exposed.

"The appearance of this powder, to the naked eye, is very much like that of the dry-rot of timber; but, on microscopical investigation, it proves to be composed entirely of matter that has passed through the intestines of an insect, namely, the 'RHYNCOLUS LIGNARIUS,' or Weevil of the Elm. It is a dark, piceous-coloured insect, about one-sixth of an inch in length, not unfrequent in the vicinity of the metropolis, and captured generally beneath the bark of elms. From the first moment of burial, these creatures are at work in the larva state. With plenty of food, and under the favourable conditions of damp and quiet, with absence of their enemies, the weevils propagate numerous generations, which feed, continue the species, and die off only when the vegetable fibre is completely destroyed. The wood then, drilled with holes, dry

and rotten, falls asunder and leaves that heap of brown dust of shapeless molecules, whose composition (for it is no longer wood) becomes a chemical, not a botanical, problem.

"A free circulation of air, which causes the wood to dry quickly, renders it unfit for or unpalatable to the weevils.

"The vaults where the entire destruction of the wood has taken place most completely, are the large portico-vault of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, containing several hundred coffins, almost every one of which is stripped of its external wood; St. Margaret's, Westminster (one vault); St. Peter's, Cornhill; St. Dionis Back Church; and St. Mary-at-Hill.

"The atmosphere of a vault containing wooden coffins, *cæteris paribus*, is much more impure than where leaden coffins alone are allowed. But a well-ventilated vault containing wooden coffins is more endurable than one badly ventilated which contains no wooden cases. It follows, that where a vault is only kept pure by thorough ventilation, the surrounding atmosphere must have been poisoned by receiving the impurities from the vault. Although, therefore, a non-ventilated vault is highly dangerous to enter, it is a guarantee to the neighbours that the air they breathe is, *à tanto*, free from so much additional impurity. In whichever way this subject is viewed, there cannot remain a doubt in any unprejudiced mind, that the authorities of St. Dionis are correct in asserting that 'the practice of interment in vaults is highly prejudicial to the health of the inhabitants.'

"In many churches the entrance to the vaults is in the body of the church, the atmosphere of which must receive an irruption of poisonous gases each time that the vaults are opened. Thus in St. Bennet's, Gracechurch, five flagstones have to be raised from the aisle, about a foot depth of soil is then removed and thrown into the body of the church, and lastly a trap-door is opened—and this forms the entrance into the vault. Besides this direct communication with the interior of the church, a great many other bodies are buried in the soil under the flagstones of all parts of the church. Is it to be wondered at that in such places the more delicate members of the congregation complain of frequent illness during Divine service?

"The exact number of coffins in the vaults can only be ascertained by counting them. But in many vaults this is not possible, from the fact of the place being so occupied by piles upon piles that a large number cannot be seen. In some instances, the sexton, who is generally the best informed person on this point, does not know within two or three hundred.

"In some few cases, as in the chapel in the Bayswater-road, a registry of every vault funeral is kept, but this is the exception, not the rule.

"In the greater number of the vaults, after a few years, from the destruction of the external wood, or other causes, it is impossible to ascertain the former name of the occupant of the narrow abode.

"The number of coffins in the vaults of the above-named chapel is 1120. It is larger in the vaults and catacombs of Saint Martin-in-the Fields.

"In St. Mary's Woolnoth the churchwarden thinks there are about 1100 coffins; the sexton considers there are not more than 500. In this church leaden coffins have only been used (except in the chancel) since the regulations of the General Board of Health enjoining the use of lead. In St. Mary-at-Hill there are about 150; in St. Bride's

between 300 and 400; in St. Mary-le-Bow about 500. But in several of the churches it is difficult to account for the very small number now to be found in the vaults. In some of them interment has been going on ever since the great fire of London—in some even before that event. Thus, in St. Peter's, Cornhill, there are but 72 coffins. In St. Margaret's, Westminster, very few, only 6 of which are of a date anterior to 1795. In St. Andrew Undershaft, 77. St. Bennet's, Gracechurch, 15; but the vaults are of recent date in this church.

"It is extremely difficult to arrive at satisfactory evidence of the cause and manner of the disappearance of the older coffins. That in many instances a great number of coffins have been removed no one doubts, but, on questioning different parties thereon, the answer is almost always 'I don't know.'

"The following is some of the clearest evidence on this point that I have been able to collect:—

"Mr. Cribb, of King-street, Covent-garden, says that when he became churchwarden of St. Paul, Covent-garden, many years ago, the sexton kept the keys of the vaults, and had uncontrolled access to them. He has reason to believe that many old leaden coffins were removed prior to his accession to the office. He believes that these were usually removed during the night, and the lead sold.

"On interrogating the sextoness of St. Andrew Undershaft she stated that she knew that the vault had constantly been cleared out, and the old coffins removed to make room for newer ones.

"*Mr. Underwood* gave evidence to the following effect:—'I was churchwarden about 20 years ago, and when on the point of leaving that office *the last clearing out* of the vault was made. Everything above a hundred years old was then turned out. Many of the coffins were crushed quite flat. Many had sunk into the soil from the weight of the upper coffins pressing upon them. All on the left-hand side of the vault were removed; none on the right, as they were the newest. I do not know how many coffins were then removed, but there must have been a great many, as it took a week to do. The contents of the coffins were buried in the churchyard. I do not know what was done with the lead.'

"The churchwardens of St. Margaret, Westminster, 'cannot account for the absence of all the old coffins. They never heard of any faculty from the Bishop having been granted for their removal.'

"The vaults of St. Peter's, Cornhill, have been devoted to the reception of the dead as long as, or perhaps longer than, those of any other church in the metropolis, but none of the authorities can account for their now containing but 72 coffins.

"There has evidently been much reprehensible laxity in the guardianship of these places generally throughout the metropolis. Even at the present day, in many instances the keys are kept by the sexton or sextoness, and the churchwarden knows little or nothing of the condition or contents of the vaults.

"From this state of things, and the notion that obtains among many persons, that the remains once deposited in these receptacles are not always sacred, but are removed at intervals, to make room for fresh deposits, has arisen the custom of purchasing private vaults. These consist sometimes of small portions of the public vault, partitioned off

from the rest by brick walls with an iron or wooden gate, the key of which is kept by the owners of the vault. At other times strong iron chains are suspended from the roof, and pass completely round the pile of coffins, which are thus separated from the rest. Large sums are paid for this seclusion, varying from 50*l.* to 200*l.*, in addition to the usual fees charged for vault funerals.

"As to the quality and quantity of the gases produced by the decomposition of the human body in leaden coffins, I am persuaded, from the researches I have made, that many false notions are entertained on the subject. Thus it has been asserted that the results of this action are sulphuretted, carburetted, and phosphuretted hydrogen, and cyanogen. Without asserting positively that some or all of these gases may not be occasionally evolved, I may be permitted to inform your Honourable Board that I have tested, either by the aid of chemistry or by their effects on the olfactory organs, the gases produced in upwards of 60 coffins. These contained the remains of individuals of all ages, from the stillborn infant to the octogenarian. They had been interred at different periods, varying from one week to 90 years. In no single instance have I been able to detect the smallest proportion of any of the above gases. In every case the gases extinguished flame, and were themselves incombustible. They consisted, under all the above varied circumstances, of similar substances. These were nitrogen and carbonic acid gases, holding putrescent animal matter in suspension. Occasionally a large quantity of ammoniacal gas was present, in addition to the substances mentioned. This was quickly detected by its pungent odour, and its forming dense white fumes with hydrochloric acid. One other proof of the rare presence of gases containing sulphur is, that the lead is in all cases converted into a carbonate. I have never found the smallest particle of sulphate present. Except when ammonia is present in large quantities (in which case it predominates over all the other odours), the smell of the coffin-gases is always that of very putrescent cheese, due to the decaying animal matter.

"The injurious effects of these gases I have already described from personal experience. They are present in leaden coffins sometimes in a few hours after death; sometimes after 70 years.

"Sometimes they are generated so rapidly as to expand the lead and raise the screws in the wood. This condition is designated commonly by the term 'blown.' It has been asserted that unless holes are made in the lead, all coffins must first become blown, and ultimately burst from the continued pressure from within. This is far from being a fact. I have carefully examined many thousand leaden coffins, and have not found more than 16 thus blown. Out of 60 that I tested for this express purpose, but two were unsound. All the rest were air-tight. This was proved by forcing in a quantity of air, and after a certain time ascertaining whether it had escaped by any other aperture than the one made on purpose, and which I had closed with a stop-cock. In this manner I have ascertained that coffins of the date of 1763 were quite air-tight.

"I am not prepared to say that lead may not act as a filter and allow a passage to certain hydrogenous gases, and refuse it to others denser, as carbonic acid.

"The evidence of all the sextons and undertakers whom I have examined goes to prove that it is extremely rare to meet with a blown coffin. In St. Mary-le-Bow, out of nearly 500 coffins, not one is in that state. In St. George's, Bayswater, out of 1120, there were but two.*

"Occasionally the acrid organic fluids contained in the lead excite a galvanic action, where they come in contact with this metal and solder. A corroding action then ensues, the lead is destroyed, and a vent is made through which the fluids slowly distil; but I have never met with a well-authenticated case of a coffin bursting from the pressure of the gaseous fluids within. Generally speaking, except in cases of dropsy, either only a limited quantity of gases is formed, or the nascent gases combine to form water, ammonia, or other substances which form solids with the lead.

"It will be seen from the above statements that a strong leaden coffin will retain all the products of decomposition for a very long period. In one instance a coffin that had been 67 years in the vaults was perfectly air-tight, and contained nearly two gallons of a coffee-coloured ammoniacal fluid.

"If the lead were made as thick as the regulation of your Honourable Board dictated, and no coffin allowed to rest upon another, I am of opinion that no case of bursting would take place; but the coffins are constantly crushed and broken by the custom of piling one on the other, till, in many vaults, the upper coffin is in contact with the roof. When it is considered that a coffin and its contents frequently weigh three or four hundredweight, and that as many as 13 are sometimes heaped together in one column, it will be seen how considerable must be the pressure on the lower ones, and that it is not to be wondered at if, as at St. Andrew Undershaft, 'the lower coffins were driven into the ground, and pressed quite flat.' The object of this piling is of course to economise space, each coffin that is placed in a vault being, in the words of one of the sextons, 'worth a good five-pound note.'

"In wooden coffins decomposition goes on very much more rapidly, three or four years generally sufficing to reduce the contents to a dry, powdery, bony skeleton. The surrounding air soon becomes charged with the products. After a certain number of years, depending upon the state of the ventilation of the vault, the wood drops to powder, or becomes so rotten as no longer to hold together, and the contents are revealed to the visitor."

The preceding exposition of the present state of the vaults of the metropolitan churches, and of the deleterious nature of the atmosphere so generally found in them, must be regarded as affording strong confirmation of the soundness of the following resolution, passed so long ago as the 15th of February, 1832, by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, against the practice of interment in churches; namely,

* The evidence here given relates to the effects observed *after* entombment, and is distinct from that showing the occasional rapid development of the gases *before* entombment, particularly in hot weather.

"We will take this opportunity of observing, that the practice of burial in the church or chancel appears to us to be in many respects injurious; in some instances by weakening or deteriorating the fabric of the church, and in others by its tendency to affect the lives and health of the inhabitants. We are of opinion that in future this practice should be discontinued, so far as the same can be effected without trenching upon vested rights."

In the preceding account we have confined our attention to the state of the burial-grounds and of the vaults of the churches of the metropolis. We have, however, made inquiries, though to a more limited extent, into the condition of the burial-grounds of country towns. As far as the examination has yet proceeded, the evidence shows that the condition of burial-grounds in country towns is even worse than it is in the metropolis, and we have hitherto met with no single instance in which the care and management of these places of interment are in any respect superior.

We may cite the following evidence collected by Mr. Ranger respecting the burial-ground of St. Andrew's, Hertford:—

"The sexton stated he had dug the ground for the last 20 years; that it is the practice to place coffin upon coffin, without an intermediate stratum of earth; he has buried three in one grave within a period of six months, the upper coffin lying within two feet six inches of the surface; he has frequently had to disinter remains with the grave-clothes on, and also to remove the wreck of bones from as many as five bodies in getting down a single grave. The gravel excavated from the graves is sifted in the churchyard, and the larger stones, with particles of dust adhering, are removed for repairing the roads.

"Mr. Greeve, the surveyor, said, the miasma arising from the stones taken from the churchyard, even after removal and when lying at the side of the roads for use, had been so offensive that he has been obliged to leave the place, and complaints have been made from time to time during the last 15 years.

"Mr. Inskipt stated, 'I pass through the churchyard *en route* to my mill twice a-day, and the smells are particularly unpleasant and sickening; they are unlike any other smell; the ground is surrounded with high walls, and from its small and confined area the winds cannot sweep over the surface.'

"Mr. D. Browne Hagger confirmed the statement made by Mr. Inskipt, and added, 'The smell is most nauseous, particularly about six o'clock in the morning, and in the summer months.'

"Dr. Davies says, 'I am of opinion that St. Andrew's churchyard is very injurious to the health of the inhabitants residing in its neighbourhood.'

"Mr. John Woodhouse, surgeon, says, 'Having resided nearly nine years immediately opposite to the churchyard of St. Andrew's parish, I am able to express my decided opinion that the ground is greatly overfilled, and that an exhalation at times arises from it which is very offensive, and prejudicial to the health of persons residing in the neighbourhood.'"

As an example of the churchyard of a country town, we beg to call attention to the following account, by Dr. Sutherland, of the state and treatment of the burial-ground of

ST. MARY MAGDALEN, TAUNTON.—"The churchyard of St. Mary Magdalen is said to have been opened above three centuries. The oldest date on the church is 1508, and the oldest known burial bears date 1578. Burials take place in vaults, brick graves, and common graves.

"The churchyard of St. Mary Magdalen is crowded by inhabited houses, streets, and lanes on two sides. On a third side there are houses at a short distance, and on the fourth side is the vicar's house and garden, beyond which are two streets of inhabited houses.

"A few years ago the soil of the churchyard was in some parts 3 feet above the present level. The eastern part was dug away and removed. The following extract from the evidence of Stephen Charles Parkhouse, the sexton of St. Mary Magdalen, gives an account of the proceeding:—

"'The ground was removed and sold at 6*d.* a load for dressing for farms. This was between four and five years ago. The object of the removal was to dry the church. There were about 500 cartloads removed, and the removal occupied several months. There was smell from the earth while it was being removed. The removal of this earth nearly laid some of the coffins bare. Some of these coffins had to be re-interred. There are many coffins now, in this portion of the ground, within a foot and a half of the surface, and some not 6 inches from the surface. In walking over this part my foot has often sunk into the ground from the coffins giving way.'

"The quantity of human remains removed from the churchyard of St. Mary Magdalen and converted into manure is estimated much higher by well-informed parties resident in the town; and it was stated to me, on good authority, that such was the spectacle presented by the bones scattered over the fields, that in one instance they had to be gathered together and put into a hole.

"The sexton states that he 'is often obliged to dig and fill up again, and begin in a fresh place. In opening the ground, it smells very bad. . . . When pressed for room has had to break off the end of the coffin when decayed; but if the wood is fresh and cannot be broken off, is obliged to go to a fresh place. . . . The graves are as closely packed as they can be placed. . . . The churchyard is so full that it would be impossible to bury above 30 more cholera cases without disturbing the family ground.

"'In digging a grave sometimes a coffin falls from the neighbouring grave, and has to be lifted out and re-interred.'

"After such a statement one is apt to ask the question, Is there really such a thing as a piece of ground consecrated and set apart as a resting-place for the last relics of humanity?

"The evidence of George Stuckey, who states that he has lived for the last 17 years opposite the burying-ground of St. Mary Magdalen, contains the following details:—

"'I have frequently seen the ground dug over and over. Many times, from the sound of the pickaxe, I have looked from my window

to see what was going on, and I have then seen the coffins broken open, and portions of the bodies thrown up not decayed. I have seen the skull with the hair on it, and portions of the legs with the stockings not even rotted away. I have seen the trunk of a body taken up by the gravedigger, who has stood astride the grave, and lifted it up by the aid of the pickaxe. Often I have seen small coffins dug up, and pieces of boards a yard long, that were broken up with violence, and on those occasions the smell has been so bad that we could not keep a window or door open, a fact which my neighbours can testify. It is not above a month since that my attention was drawn to the yard, from the fact that my son had driven a cat out from the yard that had made a hole in the ground, and from thence to the coffin. He told me of it, and took me to show me the spot. I saw the hole. There were two coffins side by side a few inches below the surface. The smell was so horrid that I was obliged to go away immediately.'

"Another witness, Thomas Guard, who also lives opposite the churchyard, states that he has 'seen the ground dug over and over, and skulls and bones and pieces of coffin strewed about in all directions. I have,' he says, 'often found the smell to be very bad indeed, which I suppose came from the yard.'"

Dr. Sutherland gives the following account of the mode of interring the dead in pits, as practised in Liverpool and Manchester:—

"One of the most hurtful and indecent practices I have seen in regard to the burial of the dead is that pursued in a number of burial-grounds in Liverpool and Manchester. It appears to have sprung out of the practice of burying in common graves, of which, indeed, the enormous excavations in use are but enlargements.

"Common graves are made deep enough to hold from 6 to 12 bodies; sometimes piled in single row one over the other, sometimes double, in which case the grave is broader and not so deep. After the body is deposited, a layer of earth, varying in thickness from a few inches to two or three feet, is thrown over it, and the mouth of the grave is covered with boards, or with a wooden roof, which in most cases is locked down till the grave is required again, when the cover is removed and the earth thrown to one side, so that the next corpse lowered into the grave generally rests directly on the one below. The earth is thrown over the new coffin, and the cover again fastened down. In these graves it often happens that the gases resulting from the decomposition fill the whole vacant space under the cover, so as to render the neighbouring atmosphere offensive when the cover is removed, and they thus afford a kind of experimental evidence of the manner in which the noxious emanations are generated in all graves. There are several burial-grounds where no covering whatever is placed over the coffins: they are simply piled one over the other, with or without the useless ceremony of sprinkling a little earth over the surface of each layer; the wooden lid is placed over the mouth of the grave each time, and the unwholesome gases diffuse themselves in large quantities every time it is removed.

"It not unfrequently happens that a very noxious drainage from the

piles of the dead accumulates in the bottom of the grave. I have seen a black stagnant collection around coffins, which the sexton admitted to be the produce of decomposition, for it was stated that the fluid never made its appearance until after interments had taken place.

"In one such case the effluvia on the removal of the cover were dreadfully offensive.

"In some particular kinds of soil these pits become a perfect quag-mire. The earth has to be shored up all around to prevent it from filling them up, and a quantity of water and mud percolates from the sides and covers the bottom to some depth. In this sludge the coffins are occasionally immersed.

"These excavations are sometimes made in solid rock, as in St. Patrick's Chapel burial-ground, and in Wesley Chapel burial-ground, Liverpool. The rock is new red sandstone; and from the facility with which it permits the passage of water it is generally quite dry.

"At other times, as in St. Anthony's Chapel, Liverpool, and St. John's Catholic Chapel, Salford, the sides have to be shored up to keep the earth from falling in. In the latter instance a pit capable of holding 200 bodies was dug in a wet soil, and the aspect of it was most repulsive. The nuisance was much complained of by the authorities, until steps were taken for covering the coffins with a layer of earth.

"The law requires that graves shall have 2½ feet of earth over all; and an attempt has been made in Liverpool to limit the practice of burying in common graves and pits by compelling the covering of coffins with this depth of soil. The law is evaded in two instances in an ingenious manner.

"At St. Anthony's Chapel, Liverpool, a large box, capable of containing the requisite depth of earth is suspended from a windlass over the mouth of the pit, and this box is lowered till the surface of the earth which it contains is on a level with the soil in the churchyard. In another instance, a scaffolding is placed in the grave at the depth of 2½ feet from the surface, and the space is filled in with earth, which, however, is removed for the next interments, and thrown on the surface. The scaffolding is then lifted out, and the bodies lowered, after which it is replaced and the earth filled in. In some instances it is customary to allow the grave to remain open till the whole day's burials have taken place, and then a layer of earth is strewn over the coffins. The following are the details in regard to the pits used in the Liverpool burial-grounds:—

"St. Patrick's Cemetery, Park-road.—There are two public graves open in this burial-ground, which are covered on the top with planks. One of these graves is a new one, the excavation of which is just completed; its depth is 26 feet 4 inches, its length 8 feet, and its breadth 10 feet 10 inches: it is estimated that this grave will hold from 90 to 100 coffins, large and small. There is one side of this grave cemented, in order to prevent any offensive matter oozing into it from the adjoining pits, which are filled with bodies, and which are only separated from it by a narrow wall of rock about 9 inches thick.

"The other public grave is now filled to within 5 feet of the top with bodies; its original depth was from 27 to 29 feet, its length is

8 feet 5 inches, and its breadth 10 feet 10 inches. Both these pits are close to one of the doors opening into the vestry or chapel.

"The hours of interment in these pits are at 3½ o'clock P.M. daily, and the coffins are lowered into the graves by ropes.

"There is a channel cut in the rock on each side that allows a sliding board to be moved up or down as required, and which divides the pit into two parts, so that when coffins are let down they are placed on one side of this board, while on the other side there is kept 3 or 4 feet of earth ready to be thrown over the coffins interred, but which is again thrown back previous to another interment, leaving the lids of the coffins exposed to view; the coffins then to be interred are laid upon those from which the covering of soil has been removed, and which is scarcely more than an inch deep. The coffins are thus placed over each other in successive layers until they reach within 3 feet of the surface, when the grave is finally closed with earth.

"The number of persons interred in this public grave in the week ending 21st October instant was 9 children and 6 adults. The graveyard in which these pits are situated is surrounded by houses.

"WESLEYAN CHAPEL BURIAL-GROUND, STANHOPE-STREET.—There is one public grave now open in this burial-ground; its length is 6 feet 9 inches, its breadth 7 feet 3 inches, and its depth from 18 to 19 feet.

"The time of interment in this grave is 4½ o'clock P.M. daily, and it is calculated that it will hold from 50 to 60 large and small coffins. The number of interments in it from the 12th October instant to the 24th amounted to 18 children and 25 adults. This graveyard is surrounded by houses.

"ST. JAMES'S CEMETERY.—There are two public graves open in this cemetery; the length of each is 7 feet, breadth 3 feet 3 inches, and depth from 17 to 18 feet. The ends and sides of these graves are supported by planks screwed together, forming the shape of the grave, and which are withdrawn as interments take place. The coffins are lowered by ropes, and one or two inches of soil are left between them. After each interment the grave is covered with a wooden lid, which is locked at each end. When the grave is filled with coffins to within 3 feet of the surface, it is filled up with earth and finally closed. St. James's Cemetery is placed in an old stone-quarry, surrounded by houses, but at a distance."

"NECROPOLIS, WEST DERBY-ROAD.—There is one public grave open in this cemetery; its length is 6 feet 4 inches, its breadth 3 feet, and its depth 10 feet. Two feet six inches of soil are temporarily placed over the coffins interred, to be again removed, however, previous to another interment, when the same process is repeated, and continued until the grave is filled within 2 feet 6 inches of the surface, when it is finally closed. After each interment a wooden cover or shield is placed over the grave. During the week ending 7th of August last, 36 adults and 33 children were interred in the public graves; and during the week ending 23rd October instant, 11 adults and 13 children were interred in them. The graveyard is partially surrounded by houses: it was originally suburban.

"St. Anthony's Cemetery, Scotland-road.—There is one public pit open in this cemetery; its length is 6 feet 6 inches, its breadth 4 feet 6 inches, and its depth 22 feet; after each interment a sprinkling of soil is thrown over the coffins, which is not afterwards removed. A wooden plank is placed on each side of the top of the grave, on which a machine running on four wheels is drawn: this carriage bears a wooden box which contains 3 feet of soil, and when placed over the mouth of the grave it is lowered by an iron windlass connected with the machine into the grave until it is level with the surface of the ground, it remains in that position until the next interment, when it is drawn up and wheeled off the opening of the grave on to the ground adjoining, when other coffins are placed on those previously interred, and the same process of covering is again repeated and continued until the grave is filled with coffins within 2 feet 6 inches of the surface, when it is finally closed. This burial-place is situated in a thickly-peopled neighbourhood, although a wide public street fronts it.

"St. Martin's Cemetery, Vauxhall-road.—This cemetery is divided into two portions, one devoted to the interment of paupers, and the other to the interment of other poor persons. In the latter portion of this cemetery there is now one public grave open; the public graves are 7 feet 2 inches long, their breadth 3 feet, and their depth varying from 12 to 18 feet according to the state of the drainage. There is a quantity of loose soil always kept in these graves. At the time of interment the coffins previously interred are cleared of the soil, which is put on one side of the grave until after the new interments are concluded, when the whole of the coffins are temporarily covered with 2 feet 6 inches of soil; the grave is then covered with a wooden shield level with the surface, and the same process of covering is afterwards repeated, and continued until the grave is filled within 2 feet 6 inches of the surface, when it is finally closed.

"Paupers.—There is one public grave in this cemetery used for the interment of paupers; its length is 7 feet 2 inches, its breadth 4 feet 6 inches, and the depth 21 feet: a space of 2 feet is left between each grave. After each interment 8 inches of soil are thrown over the coffins, and which is not afterwards removed. The grave is then covered over at the top with a wooden shield until the next interment takes place, the cover is then removed, other coffins are interred, and the same process of covering is repeated until the coffins reach within 2 feet 6 inches of the surface, when the grave is finally closed.

"Where these public graves and pits are formed in the solid rock, a very narrow partition is in general left between them, so that a considerable part of the entire cubic contents of the graveyards round those chapels where this disgusting practice is in use consists of putrescent human remains and rotting wood. In some cases this compost extends nearly 30 feet in depth.

"Fortunately there are no wells very close to these churchyards, otherwise they would inevitably be poisoned, but, as it is, infiltration takes place *laterally*, of which a curious proof was afforded lately. The Health Committee of the Liverpool Town Council make use of sand and shingle for paving purposes, and they agreed to purchase a quan-

tity of broken sandstone rock taken from a pit in the course of being excavated in one of those churchyards. The sand was carted away and deposited in a yard, but the inhabitants made immediate complaints of it, and requested its removal.

"Dr. Duncan, the Officer of Health, was requested to inspect it; and on examining the sand he found it to be impregnated with highly offensive and noxious effluvia which had evidently resulted from the percolation of putrescent matters from the pits in the neighbourhood.

"Pits are used for interment in a number of the burial-grounds of Manchester.

"At St. Austin's Catholic chapel they bury four bodies in the same grave. In the burial-ground behind Livesay-street Catholic chapel, deep pits are dug in which the coffins are deposited in tiers with a little earth between them. At St. Luke's Catholic chapel the pits are 20 feet deep, and the burials take place in the same manner. There was one pit open in the graveyard of St. John's Catholic chapel, Salford, originally intended to receive 200 bodies. In the large burial-ground of All Saints, Chorlton, they dig common graves 10 feet deep, and sprinkle a little earth over each layer of coffins. It takes a fortnight or more to fill these receptacles with dead. The common graves at the New Jerusalem Temple, Salford, hold from 6 to 12 corpses. At the Irwell-street cemetery, Salford, they have two *different classes of pits*—one class holding from 24 to 26 bodies, and the other about 40. It sometimes takes two months to fill one of them. When I was there a fresh pit had been opened, the odour from which was most offensive. Burials take place in a private cemetery in Every-street, Ardwick, in pits 20 feet deep, which are not filled in less than a fortnight.

"It might have been expected that the public cemeteries of Manchester would have afforded some evidence of improvement in this matter; but here, as in those of Liverpool, the poor man is obliged to deposit his head amidst a crowd of others. In the Manchester General Cemetery they bury in common graves about 11 feet deep. In the Rusholme-road Cemetery they thrust a dozen corpses into the same grave. At the Ardwick Cemetery there was a pit open, about 30 feet deep, in which the dead would be piled up to within about three feet of the surface, and the final covering of earth would not be placed over this mass of corruption until some three weeks or a month had elapsed from the deposit of the first coffin.

"Complaints of several graveyards where pits exist have frequently been made, but the law cannot at present reach them.

"They are said to be very profitable to the burial-ground interests where they are in use, but in my opinion they cannot be otherwise than hurtful and demoralizing. On one occasion when a grave of this kind was opened I saw a large toad crawling slowly along one of the coffins. Such a sight could not have been otherwise than shocking to every proper feeling of humanity; and indeed the whole custom argues such a degree of debased feeling and perception on the part of the people who submit to its continuance, as to be its own condemnation.

"When considered in a sanitary point of view, there can be no two opinions as to the injurious tendency of interments in common graves

and pits. Their real effect is to render successive portions of the churchyards, within a small compass of time, absolutely worse than the most overcrowded graveyards of the metropolis have been rendered by centuries of interments.

"There is no argument which can be brought against the metropolitan graveyards which does not apply with tenfold force to all the surface of the Liverpool and Manchester graveyards, which has been honeycombed with common receptacles for the dead.

"They are literally holes filled with reeking corruption, and distilling its noxious influences into the air above and the earth beneath."

Of some of the SHEFFIELD churchyards Dr. Sutherland gives the following description:—

"One marked peculiarity of these churchyards is their situation on elevated ground which slopes suddenly down from them, sometimes on one side, sometimes on another, while the slopes below the level of the yards are covered with houses; the soil is in a large proportion of the superficial area a stiff retentive wet clay, not suitable for the ordinary purposes of interment; and such is the amount of water at times in newly made graves, that it appears as if there were local springs from which it proceeded, as well as the usual accumulation from the atmosphere.

"The churchyards connected with the parish church, St. James's and St. Paul's churches, are quite full, while that surrounding St. George's church is not so crowded.

"The evidence received by me goes to prove the following facts:—

"ST. PETER'S (THE PARISH CHURCH).—This churchyard has been opened above 700 years, and for 600 years it was the only burial-place in Sheffield. It contains 10,999 superficial yards, and the average annual number of interments is 673, or one interment to every 16 square yards. About two-thirds of the surface are stone, favourable for percolation of moisture, the remaining third of shale and clay, the last of which is very wet and retentive.

"This graveyard is surrounded by inhabited houses on three sides closely, and it is 6 feet above the level of the houses in some parts. It is frequently necessary to lade the water out of the graves in the clay part of the ground. The drainage in passing into the rock follows the stratification, and sometimes comes out in the streets, while at others it reaches the lower parts of the town and exudes into the wells from which the poor are supplied with water. At times this churchyard is very offensive, and is said visibly to affect the health of the inhabitants in the neighbourhood; a large comparative mortality is said to occur near it. In the opinion of able members of the medical profession it is injurious to the health of the neighbourhood. The drainage from it is most offensive, and can be detected at all the sewer-grates near it; and the water which is baled out of the graves is also most nauseous and repulsive. From the crowded state of this churchyard practices of a very disgusting and indecent kind are resorted to by the gravediggers.

"ST. JAMES'S.—Has an area of 874½ square yards. It was opened

in 1786, and receives 37 interments per annum. The ground consists partly of soil and partly of stone. It is full and offensive, and is closely surrounded by inhabited houses. The main cause of complaint in this case is the drainage, which flows down the hill, and is complained of in the houses, and infects the wells in the lower parts of the town.

"St. Paul's.—This churchyard was opened in 1720. It has a superficial area of 5991 square yards, with an annual number of interments equal to 203. The soil consists of three-fourths clay and one-fourth stone, and it is very wet. The ground is so saturated with water that it is said to be impossible to dig a grave without its being deluged with putrid water from other parts of the ground, which has to be baled out on the surface. This graveyard is surrounded by inhabited houses, into the basement stories of some of which the drainage has escaped, covering them to some depth with offensive fluid. In one large first-class house close to this churchyard, three cases of fever, one of which was fatal, occurred. This burying-ground is so full as to occasion indecent practices to the remains of the dead on the part of the gravediggers. It is considered to be injurious to health by competent medical authority.

"St. George's.—Was opened in 1830, and has an area of 8418 square yards. Annual interments 465. The ground consists of wet retentive clay, and in certain parts of it graves cannot be dug without becoming filled with water to some depth. Attempts have been made to drain this churchyard without success. Part of the drainage is carried away by a public sewer, but the odour from the gully-grates along its course is offensive, and the gases generated are said to enter private houses by the house-drains. Part of the drainage also exudes into the public streets, which are all below the level of the churchyard. It is entirely surrounded with houses, and the effluvia from it are said to be 'one of the greatest nuisances in the town.' Mr. Overend is of opinion that this graveyard is, like all the others, injurious to health.

"Respecting the parish churchyard, Mr. *Wilson Overend* gives the following evidence:—

"'Thirty years ago I was old enough to judge of the condition of the parish churchyard. At that time it was so full that it was not possible to inter a body a moderate depth without exhuming others which had been previously buried there; the same proceeding has taken place up to the present time. This churchyard was the sole place of interment for the inhabitants of Sheffield for 600 years, according to the chronicles of the town, and the burials still continue very numerous in it. I have no doubt that the superincumbent soil for 6 feet is composed almost entirely of decomposed human bodies.

"'Towards Camp-lane the churchyard is 6 feet above the street, and that side consists of stone, over and through which the drainage passes by natural drainage to the houses below, continuing its course below the streets (upon whose surface it sometimes shows itself, causing most noxious exhalations) down to the lower parts of the town, where it pollutes the springs from which the poorer class of inhabitants obtain

their water. : The churchyard is surrounded by houses. The effluvium is sometimes very offensive, and I am satisfied that the health of the inhabitants of the neighbourhood has suffered from it. I need only state that the vicarage, which stands on the upper side of the church yard, has not been occupied by the present vicar of Sheffield for many years on account of it not suiting his health.'

"'St. Paul's Churchyard.—Is surrounded entirely by houses: on one side the houses are built up close to the churchyard; on another side is a footpath; and on the other two sides it is bounded by streets. The soil is very retentive clay, and when a grave is opened it is very shortly deluged with water, which water is the drainage from the surrounding graves, containing a large quantity of decomposing animal matter in solution. This is laded out with buckets, and poured upon the surface of the churchyard, where it speedily evaporates, creating a pestilential atmosphere in the neighbourhood. Until within the last 12 months this water of the churchyard drained across the street adjoining Norfolk-street into the houses, rendering them almost uninhabitable. Since that period a drain has been made down the centre of the street, which is a common sewer, into which all the drains from the private houses empty themselves. This churchyard is perfectly full, and no interment could take place without disturbing a previous one. The surface of the churchyard is, except on part of one side, considerably above the surrounding streets, and on the side of Norfolk-street alluded to above it is 6 feet above the level of the street.

"'St. George's Churchyard.—Its soil is a strong retentive clay. The stench from the drain at nights is most offensive from the grates along its course, and in certain conditions of the weather the exhalations from the deposits in this drain penetrate into the dwelling-houses through the private drains communicating with the main sewer, and having the peculiar churchyard odour, which is not to be mistaken. Whatever drainage these churchyards possess is through the sewers into which drains from the private houses empty themselves, the exhalations from which, in some conditions of the weather, invariably pass into the houses and render them unfit for the time for human habitation.'

Henry Jackson says,—

"'Is Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons; lives in St. James's-row, in the upper side to the parish churchyard. Has lived in the house he now occupies for many years, and latterly the interments in this churchyard have become a positive source of annoyance, from the turning up of coffins and the exposure of human remains. Has seen water baled out of the graves in the clayey portion of the churchyard. Considers this churchyard completely full. The clay portion of it is drained into a common sewer in Church-street, and has often had to go out of his way to avoid the effluvium from the fresh-dug graves on that side (the clayey side) of the churchyard. Considers, as a professional man, that this churchyard is injurious to the public health, especially from the dense and increasing population round it.'

"*F. Webster*, solicitor, 14, St. James's-row, Sheffield, states,—

" 'Since May last I have watched the gravediggers in the parish churchyard very attentively: I have seen them dig and break through coffins and hide the bones and pieces of coffin under boards placed at the sides of the grave for that purpose, while small pieces of bone thrown out with the soil have been trampled under it until the funeral was ended.

" 'I have seen thigh or leg bones, arm-bones, and pieces of the skull, thrust under the side-board, and then hidden from the sight by pieces of coffin and lumps of earth. While one is throwing out the soil it is very common for another to examine it, and then begin trampling out of sight such pieces of the remains of formerly interred corpses as are thrown out with the loose soil.

" 'On a warm, close day, with a south or south-east wind, I dare not keep my office window open; the smell from the churchyard is so offensive as to make me ill for the rest of the day.

" 'I have very frequently seen them bale water out of the graves and carry it into St. James's-street, where it was poured down the common sewer. The offensiveness of this was intolerable; so nauseous, so disgusting to the smell and taste, as to have made me ill, on several occasions, for the rest of the day. My taste has been so affected by it, and the nausea so great, as to cause me to expectorate continually from St. James's-street to Victoria-street. This offensive practice was the origin of the annexed Report of the Highway Board. As being a member of that Board, I brought the question forward with a view of putting a stop to it.'

" *Benjamin Micklethwaite*, surgeon, 'lives in Theobald's-street, directly opposite St. Paul's, below the level of the churchyard. About two years ago the drainage from this churchyard used to escape from the wall into the street; but about that period the wall was cemented inside, and the drainage from the churchyard, not being able to escape by the usual channel, passed into the cellar of my house, to the depth of 6 inches. It was very offensive. The odour was peculiar, like that of decomposing matter. The same drainage took place into the other houses in the row, and in the next house but one there were three cases of fever, one of which was fatal. About a year ago, a drain was laid in the street which carried off the drainage. In passing over the churchyard on the south side, after a grave has been opened, the smell is very offensive. The constant practice is to take up the old coffin, lay it on one side, cover it with a little earth, and return it over the top of the newly interred coffin. One winter's night an accumulation of coffins covered with earth was made. In the course of the night the dogs made a hole into the mound and dragged out portions of human remains. Has found a human bone in a highway street, which he thinks might have been carried from this churchyard. It is believed that the sexton goes round the churchyard occasionally to pick up bones which have been carried away.' "

Of the state of the burial-grounds in Wales and Scotland, as far as they have been examined, some conception may be formed from the following extracts from the Reports of Mr. Bowie:—

"CHURCHYARD OF NEATH, GLAMORGANSHIRE.—Crowded to excess; the earth of a black colour, greasy to the touch, suggesting the idea of rottenness, and smelling shockingly. The Welsh have a passion for re-inspecting the bodies of their deceased relations in the various stages of their decomposition. To such an excess do they indulge this passion that they will sometimes dig up bodies that have been recently buried, and lay the coffins at the side of the grave until they can deposit beneath them the coffins of those who have still more recently died. The smell on these occasions is dreadful, as I have myself often experienced; but those around me did not appear to be sensible of it: indeed few of the natives of the Principality that I met with gave any evidence that they possessed the sense of smell. As a general rule, even educated persons are in a state of total ignorance as to the injurious influence of the emanations from burial-grounds. In the present instance I found the rector a zealous sanitary reformer; but I could not persuade him that there was any danger to be apprehended from the crowded state of his churchyard. He seemed to have no belief in the fact that pernicious gases might penetrate through the earth that covers a corpse, and escape at the surface. The moment I endeavoured to enlist him in the cause of preventing any further overcrowding in the churchyard, his sanitary ardour abated. The very idea that a body, after having been buried, could injure the living, seemed never to have entered his mind.

"CADOXTON CHURCHYARD, NEAR NEATH.—I do not know how otherwise to describe the state of this churchyard than by saying that it is truly and thoroughly abominable. The smell from it is revolting. I could distinctly perceive it in every one of the neighbouring houses which I visited, and in every one of these houses there have been cases of cholera or severe diarrhœa. One evening my throat became so full of this stench as nearly to make me sick; and I believe on the same evening a surgeon and his lady, in merely passing the churchyard, were seized with a sense of coldness, faintness, and sickness, and on reaching home, about an hour afterwards, were quite ill. Yet, in defiance of this, in defiance of the numerous deaths that have taken place in the immediate neighbourhood, in defiance of my earnest remonstrances, and in defiance of the order of the General Board of Health, interments still go on unchecked in this burial-ground, and the civil power has hitherto failed in putting an end to the practice. The curate told me that my efforts to close the churchyard had placed my own life in peril, and guns, at a late hour of the night, were frequently fired off near my residence; but he at the same time disclosed to me the true cause of the opposition, by observing that if the funerals did not come to Cadoxton they would go to Neath, which would be a loss to the vicar, who had gone to the continent, and left him in charge, when cholera broke out.

"MERTHYR-TYDVIL OLD CHURCHYARD.—Occupies a space of about 60 feet long and 30 feet wide, encircled with houses; stands on the west side of the High-street, nearly in the centre of the town: completely filled with bodies, having been for many years the principal, if not the only burial-ground. Human remains, pieces of coffin, &c.,

are here profusely scattered about or piled in heaps together. My conviction is that this churchyard operates injuriously on the health of the persons residing in its neighbourhood, and it is certain that this is one of the localities in which cholera raged.

"Bethesda Graveyard, Merthyr-Tydvil.—A small burial-ground belonging to a congregation of Welsh Independents. My attention was attracted to this burial-ground from having seen a number of severe and fatal cases of cholera in a nest of hovels called Bethesda-square, all in a disgusting state of filth. The graveyard is situated above the level of this square, and is itself overtopped, especially at the south and east sides, by an immense heap of refuse and other putrescent matters. There is a well in the square, or rather a hole, containing filthy water, which must necessarily have percolated in part from the churchyard: this water the poor people who came under my notice were only too glad to use when they could obtain it. It is difficult, where so many causes of disease are combined, to ascertain the exact influence of any one cause; but my conviction is that the state of this churchyard contributes largely to the extraordinary unhealthiness of this spot. Fever is hardly ever absent from it: a parochial surgeon told me that some time ago there had been seventeen cases of malignant fever in one house close to the burial-ground, and cholera raged here perhaps with greater fury than in any other locality.

"Tabernacle Graveyard is also very much crowded; it is closely surrounded with houses. Cholera has prevailed extensively in this neighbourhood. There appear to be five places of interment on the banks of the Taff, the exudations from which help to poison the stream, already rendered black with garbage and filth in passing through the iron-works. There is not one of the burial-grounds in Merthyr which ought not to be closed or placed under regulation.

"There is a churchyard on the summit of a rising ground, at the end of a narrow street, or rather ill-conditioned alley, on the left-hand side of the road at Dowlais, not far distant from Sir John Guest's residence. This churchyard, which is charged to excess with human remains, is completely surrounded by houses, in every one of which cholera has been present. I succeeded in getting this churchyard closed, but during the temporary absence of Sir John Guest's manager, and my own, it was again opened for burial, and interments still go on in it, in defiance of all authority.

"The burial-grounds of Swansea, though much too full, and some of them exhaling a very offensive odour, are in no respect as bad as those of Cadoxton, Merthyr, or Dowlais. Swansea, the cleanest town which I have yet visited in Wales, suffered the least from cholera. I would add, as the result of my experience in Wales, that wherever fever or cholera were epidemic, I found the disease localized near a burial-ground.

"Churchyard, Hawick, Roxburghshire.—Situated with its church on an eminence in the centre of the town, used as a burial-ground upwards of 400 years; extent only from 2½ to 2¾ acres; crowded to excess; in 1848 the burials were 116; in 1849, 205; within the last eight years

1100. In one street adjoining the churchyard, Kirkgate, the greatest distance of the houses from the churchyard wall is 30 feet; the houses are 7½ feet below the level of the road, and 20 feet below the level of the burial-ground. In three houses in the street, out of 35 inmates, 6 were attacked with cholera, 4 with diarrhœa, and 16 were ill with other diseases. The wall of a room in one of these houses, when I visited it, was wet with moisture percolating from the churchyard. This wall is only two feet from the graves, and the room is quite underground. In this house I found two cases of cholera, and eight of diarrhœa, out of 13 occupants. In the next house, equally damp (water dropping from the walls) and several feet below the level of the churchyard, there were three cases of cholera. In a back room in an adjoining house, close to the churchyard, and 12 feet under-ground, I was told that small white worms come up through the seams of the floor.

"In another churchyard in Hawick the graves contain so much water that the Episcopal clergyman generally gets his surplice splashed when the coffin is let into the grave. A small stream receives a quantity of water from this burial-ground; it then passes several houses on its way to the river, and in these houses cholera was very severe.'

"But in no town which I have hitherto visited have I ever seen so total a disregard to everything decent connected with the burial of the dead, or so great a desecration of their remains, as in Greenock. As examples of the burial-grounds of Greenock, I may describe those of Inverskip and Duncan-street. Inverskip has been used as a burial-ground since 1787. The interments for the last eight years, including those in Duncan-street (which comprises a piece of ground added to Inverskip about 30 years ago), averaged 100 monthly; but within the last two months of the present year (1849) there have been upwards of 200 interments monthly. These burial-grounds are crowded to a most revolting excess. While inspecting them, I saw coffins, containing decaying bodies, exposed to the air and light, and was sensible of the most horrid smells escaping from them. In other parts of the ground I saw human remains unburied, heaps of broken-up coffins partly retaining their shape, together with fragments of shrouds. On examining with the iron rod, in presence of several witnesses, the depth of the graves from the surface, I found it varied from 4 feet to 2 feet; in one instance, a grave which contained three coffins was only 1 foot from the surface, and I ascertained that one grave was 9 inches and another only 7 inches from the surface.

"The West Graveyard is quite as bad as that of Inverskip and Duncan-street, if not worse.

"That some conception may be formed of the care taken of these burial-grounds, I quote the following extract from the evidence of Mr. Alexander Lyle, jun., a lair-holder, residing at Nicholson-street, close to the churchyard:—'Has often seen boys fencing with long human bones. The wood of coffins is often burned in the churchyard. Great quantities of bones are often lying about. Has seen coffins not above 3 inches below the surface, and others level with it, covered only with the mound of earth heaped upon them. Recently a wall was taken down

and rebuilt, when the most revolting scenes were witnessed, and the smell in the neighbouring houses was so bad that it could scarcely be endured. Has seen the flesh on the bones and the hair on the head of human remains exposed to view. Has heard from his father that he had seen a child dragging a skull after him through the streets by a string through the nostrils, which skull his father caused to be re-buried.'

"Peter Chesser, nephew of Alexander Lyle, states that he 'saw a boy dragging a skull after him in the streets about six months ago;' and Mr. M'Kenzie, editor of the *General Advertiser*, was informed by a gentleman that he 'saw in the street a dog carrying a human skull.'"

These examples may suffice to show that, deplorable as may be the state of the graveyards and cemeteries of the metropolis, the condition of those in the provincial towns is still worse.

But with reference to the metropolis, with the state of which we are at present principally concerned, we recall attention to the main facts established by the whole of the preceding evidence. From the replies to queries issued by the General Board of Health, it appears that the number of public and private burial-grounds at the present time in the metropolis is 138, but this cannot be taken as the actual number, since a great many parishes have not yet sent in their returns. The total number cannot be less than 200, and is probably somewhat more. There are then in London, situated at various distances from each other, and each differing in extent, 200 centres of more or less pollution, each pouring off unceasingly, day and night, its respective contribution of decaying matter, but the whole together, reckoning only the gases from decomposing human remains, amounting, as we have seen, in one year, to upwards of two millions and a half of cubic feet. Whatever portion of these gases is not absorbed by the earth—earth already surcharged with the accumulations of centuries—and whatever part does not mix with and contaminate the water, must be emitted into the atmosphere, bearing with them, as we know, putrescent matters perceptible to sense. That these emanations do act injuriously on the health of the people resident in the immediate neighbourhood of the places from which they issue, appears to us, by the evidence that has been adduced, to be indubitably established. From the law of the diffusion of gases, they must be rapidly spread through the whole of the atmosphere that surrounds the metropolis; and though they thereby become diluted, and are thus rendered proportionally innocuous, yet that they do materially contribute to the contamination of the air breathed by two millions of the people cannot, we think, admit of any reasonable doubt. We submit, therefore, that a case is made out for the total prohibition of interment in the metropolis, on account of the injury resulting from the practice to the public health.

It is but just here to observe, from the most recent evidence above cited, how fully the representations as to the nature and extent of the evils in question, early and perseveringly made by Mr. Walker, and brought before Committees of the House of Commons by Mr. Mackinnon, have been substantiated.

II. But if there were no objection to the present practice of interment on any sanitary ground, we apprehend the considerations involved in its incompatibility with the decency and solemnity of burial would alone suffice to justify its discontinuance. The conveyance of the dead through the crowded streets of a busy city, amidst a population intently occupied with the concerns of their daily traffic, in whom the funeral processions of strangers can awaken no sympathy, but who become familiar with such spectacles from their frequency, under circumstances in which it is impossible to arrest attention or create respect, has a tendency to lessen and destroy those feelings regarding the dead which it is of the highest importance to cherish individually and nationally.

The circumstances under which these funeral processions take place in the metropolis are widely different from similar processions in country places. There, besides the absence of crowd and bustle, the deceased, whose remains are borne to their last resting-place, is known to every passer-by; and the circumstances of the death, and the condition of the bereaved family, being also generally known, excite the general sympathy; and it is not unusual for those passers-by to join the procession, to accompany it to the churchyard, and to take part with reverential feelings in the service.

But in the throng of London nothing of this can take place. Here the social tie is not in neighbourhood, but in associations or communities composed of individuals of the same occupations, professions, and ranks, who live at great distances from each other, and who, knowing nothing of their next-door neighbours, have no sympathy with them. On the occurrence of the funeral of an artizan, for example, it is not the residents in the parish that attend his funeral, but his fellow-workmen collected from various parts of the town. It is the same with professional persons of the middle classes; the mourners in this case also are rarely neighbours, but persons professionally and socially connected with the deceased, who often have to come to the parish from distances as great as to an extramural cemetery. Among the masses of the population in the immediate neighbourhood of the house of the deceased there may not be a single person to whom he is known. Among those masses, therefore, the passing-bell attracts no attention; the funeral procession excites no respect, no religious thought or feeling; and hence that hardening effect is produced which must generally result from the sight of mourning and suffering when viewed with indifference.

In the Interment Report a large body of evidence was collected from various witnesses to show the actual practical effect of the present mode of removing the corpse to the grave and of performing the funeral obsequies. Though that evidence has we believe made a deep impression on the public mind, yet, as the practice remains the same and the evils continue unabated, we recall attention to some of the statements then made, as well as to the more recent illustrations of the moral results in question, which have been brought under our notice.

Mr. Wild, an undertaker largely engaged in conducting the funerals of the humbler classes, thus describes the scenes that frequently take place on the removal of the corpse, probably to the nearest graveyard of the parish where the death has occurred:—

"The streets are very much crowded; the crowds show not the slightest reverence for the dead, quite the contrary, and it is part of the annoyance of interment in town to have to encounter them. I have met with several instances of persons stopping in the streets of London and taking off their hats. On looking at them I had reason to believe they were foreigners. Carriages, common coaches, carts, and waggons do not stop on the approach of a funeral. I have seen gentlemen pull their check-strings and tap at their windows and stop the coachman, but if the carriages were empty there was no stoppage. None of the common conveyances ever stop. I have several times run the risk of being knocked down by them. I have known cabmen and omnibus-men drive through the procession of a walking funeral and separate the mourners from the corpse. These characters display complete indifference to such scenes."

"A funeral procession through the streets of a great and busy town," says the Rev. H. Milman, "can scarcely be made impressive. Not even the hearse, in its gorgeous gloom, with all the pomp of heraldry, and followed by the carriages of half the nobility of the land, will arrest for an instant the noise and confusion of our streets, or awaken any deeper impression with the mass than idle curiosity. While the poor man, borne on the shoulders of men as poor as himself, is jostled off the pavement, the mourners, at some crossing, are either in danger of being run over or separated from the body; in the throng of passers no sign of reverence, no stirring of conscious mortality in the heart."

When at length the funeral arrives at the place of interment, it is often quite impossible to perform the religious rites with due impressiveness.

"Boys," says Mr. Wild, "crowd round the gates, and shout as ill-educated boys usually do; sometimes there are mobs; I have known the service interrupted more than once during the ceremony; sometimes the adults of the mob will make rude remarks. I have heard them call out to the clergyman, 'Read out, old fellow;' sometimes I have known them make rude remarks in the hearing of the mourners—on the clergyman frequently; but this has been on the week-days, when, of course, the numbers attending are very great. At times the adults and

mob at the gates have an idle and rude curiosity to hear the service. I have known them rush in past the mourners, and go in indiscriminately. It is part of my business to see the mourners and corpse safe in before I go in; and I have been sometimes severely hustled, and have had great difficulty in getting in myself."

"In crowded districts," says Mr. Dix, "the mode of performing the funeral ceremony is very objectionable, in consequence of the noise and bustle in the neighbourhood. I have had burials to perform in St. Clement Danes burial-ground, where the noise of the passing and the repassing of vehicles has been such that we have not heard a third of the service except in broken sentences."

"If," says the Rev. William Stone, "the working-classes of a populous city are less awfully affected by the sight of death, from an unavoidable familiarity with it in their own homes, it is to be feared that they and others meet with much to prevent or impair a wholesome sensibility upon it in public; for there the touching associations of a burial, and the sublime spirituality of our burial service, are broken in upon by the exhibition of the most vulgar and even ludicrous scenes of daily life. The eastern end of my parish ground, for instance, abuts upon Brick-lane, one of our most crowded and noisy thoroughfares, and at one corner stands a public-house, which, of course, is not without its attraction to all orders of street minstrels. Indeed, as my church extends along one side of another crowded street, I have had most inappropriate musical accompaniments, even during that part of the burial-service which is performed *within* the church. My burial-ground is partially exposed to the street at the west end also; and there, as at the east, it is liable to be invaded by sounds and sights of the most incongruous description. Boys clamber up the outside of the wall, hang upon the railing, and, as if tempted by the effect of contrast, take a wanton delight in the noisy utterance of the most familiar, disrespectful, and offensive expressions;—of course all attempts to put down this nuisance from within the burial-ground serve only to aggravate it, and nothing *could* put it down but a police-force ordered to the outside every time that a burial takes place. To this wilful disturbance is added the usual uproar of a crowded thoroughfare,—whistling, calling, shouting, street-cries, and the creaking and rattling of every kind of vehicle,—the whole forming such a scene of noisy confusion as sometimes to make me inaudible. On all these occasions, indeed, I labour under the indescribable uneasiness of feeling myself out of place. And yet the exposure of my burial-ground is but partial, and is little or nothing compared with that of many others. The ground is hardly less desecrated by the scenes within it; on Sundays, especially, it is the resort of the idle, who pass by the church and its services to lounge and gaze in the churchyard. It is made a playground by children of both sexes, who skip and scamper about it, and, if checked by our officers, will often retort with impertinence, abuse, obscenity, or profaneness. I generally have to force my way to a grave through a crowd of gossips, and as often to pause in the service to intimate that the murmurs of some or the loud talk of others will not allow me to proceed. I hardly ever witness in any of these crowds any indication of a religious sentiment. On the burial of any notorious character,—of a suicide, of a man who has perished by manslaughter, of a woman who has died in childbirth, or even of a child

who has been killed by being run over in the street,—this vulgar excitement rises to an insufferable height. If, in such a case, the corpse is brought into my church, this sacred and beautiful structure is desecrated and disfigured by the hurried intrusion of a squalid and irreverent mob, and clergyman, corpse, and mourners are jostled and mixed up with the confused mass, by the uncontrollable pressure from without."

"Nothing can be more beautiful," says the Rev. H. Milman, "more soothing under the immediate influence of sorrow, or at all times more suggestive of tranquil, yet deep, religious emotion, than the village churchyard, where the clergyman, the squire, and the peasant, pass weekly or more often by the quiet and hallowed graves of their kindred and friends to the house of prayer, and where hereafter they expect themselves to be laid at rest under a stone perhaps on which is expressed the simple hope of resurrection to eternal life, and where all is so peaceful that the tomb may almost seem as if it might last undisturbed to that time. I am inclined to think that some of the unbounded popularity of Gray's Elegy, independent of its exquisite poetic execution, may arise from these associations. Of these tranquillizing and elevating influences, so constantly refreshed and renewed, the inhabitants of large cities are of necessity deprived. The churchyard, often very small, always full, and crowded with remains of former interments, either carelessly scattered about or but ill concealed, is in some cases a thoroughfare, where the religious service is disturbed by the noises, if not of passing and thoughtless strangers, with those of the din and traffic of the neighbouring street; and the new-made grave, or the stone which has just been fixed down, is trampled over by the passing crowd or made the play-place of idle children."

There is another mode in which the present practice of interment interferes with the due celebration of the funeral service.

"In certain seasons of the year," says Mr. Wild, "when the mortality is greater than usual, a number of funerals, according to the present regulation of the churchyards, are named for one hour. During last Sunday, for example, there were fifteen funerals all fixed during one hour at one church. Some of these will be funerals in the church; those which have not an in-door service must wait outside. At the church to which I refer there were six parties of mourners waiting outside. My man informed me that all these parties of mourners were kept nearly three-quarters of an hour waiting outside, without any cover and with no boards to stand upon. The weather last Sunday was dreadfully inclement. I have seen ten funerals kept waiting in the churchyard from twenty minutes to three-quarters of an hour. I have known colds caught on the ground by parties kept waiting, and more probably occurred than I could know of. It is the practice on such occasions to say the service over the bodies of children and over the bodies of adults together, and sometimes the whole are kept waiting until the number is completed. Even under these circumstances, the ceremony is frequently very much hurried. In some parochial burying-grounds sometimes fifteen have to be buried at one time. According to the present system I do not see that it is at all times practicable for the service to be other than hurried and unsatisfactory."

"Even now, with our present very scanty demand for interment,"

says the Rev. William Stone, "I sometimes find extreme inconvenience from this part of my duties. For obvious reasons the working-classes make choice of Sunday for their burials; the very day, above all others, when the clergy and the church are almost wholly pre-engaged for other purposes. No wonder, then, that one purpose should often clash with another—that burials *in* church should clash with burials *out* of it—that clergymen should be hurried, discomposed, and exhausted—and mourners kept waiting in a cold damp burial-ground, so as to verify the old objection urged by the Puritans against our service there, that 'in burying the dead we kill the living.' On other days, too, the clergy have other engagements, so as to render it necessary to appoint burials for a particular hour—an appointment, however, often more necessary to the clergy than agreeable to the undertakers and their employers. And yet, with every precaution, the clergyman is most seriously incommoded; for, however he may try to accommodate by allowing parties to fix their own hour of burial, his time and patience are fearfully encroached upon. Burials are very seldom punctual; they arrive from twenty minutes up to an hour and a half after the hour fixed—mourners linger at home over their cups—the undertaker pleads that he 'couldn't get them to move.'"

Out of the imperfect arrangements hitherto made for respectful interment, there has further arisen in London the invidious custom of omitting that part of the burial-service which is performed within the church, unless it be specially paid for, so that a difference is made between the rich and the poor in the service of the church.

"Among the inconveniences which the necessities of our parochial system impose upon the working classes," says the Rev. W. Stone, "may be mentioned the practice just now alluded to, viz. the omission of the *in*-church service in all cases where it is not specially paid for. Looking at my parishioners in a religious light, and at a moment when all ranks and conditions are literally levelled in the dust, I feel this to be an invidious distinction between rich and poor."

"No one," says the Rev. J. V. Austin, "can have officiated as I did during the course of three years in the populous parish of St. Giles without Cripplegate, and not feel shocked at the present system. Among other things, the distinction between rich and poor is abominable, and I could only wish that the commissioners would once, for their own satisfaction, personally visit what is termed the poor's ground in Warwick-lane, Whitecross-street, and there attend a pauper's funeral. The locality, state of the ground, want of reverential feeling, and often violation of decency in tacking together a few boards begrimed with soot, would not be believed unless seen."

"I conceive," says Mr. Wild, "an in-door service to be highly acceptable to the labouring classes. In some parishes, as at Camberwell, the custom is to give an in-door service to all, whether rich or poor. This is considered highly acceptable. Where the labouring classes are excluded, they not only feel the inconvenience of having to wait, but they feel very much the exclusion on account of their poverty. They frequently complain to me, and question me as to whether it is right, and ask me the reason."

The Rev. E. R. Pemberton also bears testimony to the extreme satisfaction which he has witnessed in the poor when proper care has been taken in the construction of the grave for their deceased relatives, and when the funeral service has been duly and solemnly performed.

Considerations such as those which we have now offered, involving alike the physical and moral well-being of the people, we apprehend will satisfy the Legislature and the public that a total change in the practice of interment is absolutely necessary. But supposing the change to be determined on, in what manner is it to be accomplished? If interment in the metropolis is to be wholly discontinued, provision must be made for the removal of 52,000 corpses a-year, or of 1000 a-week and upwards, to considerable distances from the places at which the deaths occur. Provision must also be made for the decent, orderly, and impressive interment of this number of the dead. The more the subject is considered the more obvious it will appear that the object cannot be accomplished by confiding its direction and management to a number and variety of authorities.

There are three modes whereby it might be proposed to effect the requisite change.

I. The grant of powers to parishes separate or in combination.

II. The encouragement of private cemeteries, such as those of Kensal Green, Norwood, &c.

III. The appointment of a Special Board or Commission.

I.—To the first plan of carrying into effect the proposed changes, namely, by the agency of a parochial Board, the following objections may be urged:—

1. There is no existing parochial Board which has time to devote to the object. The duties already charged on these Boards are generally felt to be sufficiently onerous. If they give to this new duty the attention which its proper performance would require, that attention must be withdrawn from some other duties, which, however, cannot be neglected without injury to the public service.

2. There is no parochial Board which has the requisite knowledge. The speciality of information and aptitude required for this service cannot be attained without special attention; and there is no evidence that any existing Board has hitherto given, or is likely in future to give, such attention to the subject.

3. Even if there were the requisite time and knowledge, parochial Boards, as at present constituted, could not possibly exercise that regular and sustained supervision which the case requires. To what parish officer could this new duty be intrusted? To what committee selected out of what parochial body could this duty be intrusted? Among some of the most important objects to be accomplished by the proposed changes

are—the removal, in a regular and preappointed order, of the 52,000 corpses annually which will have to be conveyed to considerable distances; the substitution of some better method for their removal than the ordinary funeral processions in crowded streets; the prevention, eventually, of funeral processions altogether in crowded streets; the diminution of the present extortionate charges for funerals; the prevention of the physical and moral evils which at present result from the prolonged retention of the dead among the living; the protection of the remains of the dead from profanation both before and after interment; provision of the means for the respectful and solemn interment of the dead; and the creation of entirely new associations with interment by the substitution for the present graveyard of a place of burial on the thought of which the mind may dwell with complacency, and the visit to which may tend to cherish reverential feelings for the dead. What must be expected from leaving such duties requiring special qualifications, undivided attention, and strict responsibility, to a fluctuating and irresponsible body, chosen like the parish churchwardens, is proved by the state of things which has arisen in the grounds under their care, and which has been maintained against all public representations and private remonstrances and interests. Such changes as have been effected by the parochial agency, have in no instance substantially improved the practice of interments or reduced the expense, and have hitherto only shifted the evils from the interior to the suburbs of the metropolis.

4. Some of the most important of the proposed changes cannot possibly be effected by single parishes, the scale of a single parish being too small either for economy or efficiency. If, on the other hand, a number of parishes are united together for the accomplishment of this object, does the experience of any such union hitherto effected for any purpose whatever warrant the expectation of that continued and cordial co-operation without which this whole plan must be a failure? But if the union of any number of parishes could be effected without the slightest difficulty, and if the co-operation between them could be rendered perfect, the economy and efficiency of the public service would be diminished just in proportion to the number of these unions, and to the creation of so many separate and independent authorities. It will be shown hereafter that the changes in contemplation, to accomplish their object, must be carried into effect as a whole—must form one system under one direction; that many systems, each under its own independent management, would be fatal to the entire scheme. If this be so, no matter how perfect a parochial system might be devised, no matter how harmoniously the separate parts of such a system might work, the result would be total failure of the accomplishment of the main purposes in view.

5. The mere change of the place of interment would accomplish little, and would secure that little only for a short time. If

parishes, separate or combined, remove their places of burial from the metropolis to the suburbs without adopting the other proposed changes—changes which, for the reason just assigned, they cannot possibly adopt with full effciency—this would be simply to shift the existing evils from the metropolis to the suburbs. But the suburbs require protection as well as the metropolis, and without intelligent and constant supervision they would soon become as bad as the metropolis.

6. The condition in which the existing burial-grounds of the metropolis have been found, as far as they have been inspected, shows that, if interment is in future to be placed under parochial management, a special agency must be appointed for superintending the conduct of parishes in the exercise of this duty; but an authority which needs constant supervision cannot be regarded as being peculiarly fit for the trust confided to it.

7. One of the main circumstances which calls for a total change in the present practice of interment is its excessive expense. Reduction of expense to all classes, but especially to the poor, must form a principal part of any acceptable and successful plan to be substituted for the present practice. But if separate parishes or a union of parishes are to be charged with the removal of their dead to such a distance as not to interfere with the growth and health of the suburbs, the expense of removal must be increased; and as the difficulty of obtaining the means of defraying the expense is one of the principal causes of the present long delay of interment among the poor, this plan would aggravate the injury to their health and morals arising from the protracted retention of the corpse in their crowded and ill-ventilated places of abode.

8. The experience of parochial Boards discourages the hope of their general alacrity to adopt measures of improvement. When the late fatal epidemic was raging all around, in the execution of the duty charged upon us by the Legislature, under the Nuisances Removal and Diseases Prevention Act, we might have looked, at all events in the worst districts and localities, for more adequate co-operation. But so great was the resistance on the part of persons having the control of burying-grounds, that to accomplish anything we were obliged to incur the delay and expense of issuing formal orders under seal, prepared with the utmost technical care, and after such orders were issued to obtain legal assistance to prosecute or prepare for prosecution in their enforcement. Even statutory enactments would have been of little or no avail; and unless we had been able to prosecute for disobedience, our orders would in very few instances have been at all attended to. This experience, especially under the extreme urgency of the circumstances, may well suggest a doubt whether such an agency can be safely trusted with the management and control of interments. Even where there was no reason to apprehend that our instructions were received in any spirit of resistance, our

efforts to mitigate some of the existing evils in several of the worst-conditioned graveyards failed, from the impossibility of getting the orders executed by the parish officers. There were available, for example, other and less offensive and, at the same time, more effectual appliances for the purpose of disinfection than quick-lime, but it was necessary to abandon all attempt at the use of them from the difficulty of procuring their proper application.

9. Wherever attempts have been made by parochial authorities to relieve the evils arising from the condition of burial-grounds, especially by their removal to the suburbs, the effort has generally, in a greater or less degree, ended in failure. We may refer, as examples of this, among others, to the parishes of St. Giles-in-the-Fields, St. George, Hanover-square, St. James, Westminster, and St. Martin-in-the-Fields. So great was the overcrowding in these burial-grounds, that the parish officers, about 50 years ago, were led to obtain local Acts for the establishment of burial-grounds in the suburbs.

About the same time a large addition was made to the churchyard of St. Pancras, which was then suburban, and the state and management of which may be regarded as an example of the success that has attended parochial efforts at improvement. From the report of Dr. Milroy it appears that in this burial-ground, which consists altogether of between 4 and 5 acres, the average number of interments for the last 20 years has been about 1300 annually, although all classes of witnesses concur in stating that it ought to have been closed long before that period began. The following is Dr. Milroy's account of the mode in which interments have been conducted in the new ground which, in the year 1793 or 1794, was added to the ancient churchyard by a local Act of Parliament, with a view to its extension and improvement:—

"I may first remark that there could not possibly be a more unsuitable and inappropriate ground selected for the purpose of burial, in consequence of the nature and character of the soil. It is an exceedingly stiff and tenacious clay, so wet that in most places a grave cannot be dug a few feet in depth before it is partially filled with water. It is only within the last few years that any attempt has been made to remedy this serious evil; but judging from what I saw, in the case of two graves that had been begun to be dug in what is considered as the best part of the ground, the very day before my visit, I suspect that no great benefit has been done. In one of these there stood water from 6 to 8 inches in depth, within between 2 or 3 feet of the surface. The sexton said that they should be obliged to bale the water out on the morning of the day of the funeral, otherwise there would be several feet of water in the grave! Quite as little method or regularity has been followed in the use of the new ground as of the old churchyard. Nothing has ever been done in the way of registering the situation or locality of graves; and unless there are a foot and head

stone, there is no means of ascertaining or even guessing what ground has been used and what has not, except merely in so far as the sexton may happen to remember. Of course this knowledge, such as it is, will die with him; for he has never kept any record or account of the graves."

The course pursued with reference to the interment of parochial paupers is thus described, the accuracy of the account being verified by the evidence of the Rev. Mr. Drew, the clergyman of the church, who has performed the burial-service at most of the interments for several years past:—

"Let any one go into the churchyard on a Monday, Wednesday, or Friday, 'poor days,' as the phrase is, and he will see a large square pit of the size of three or four ordinary graves, excavated in soil which is black and pitchy with animal matter, and the stench exhaled from which is absolutely intolerable. Teeth, bones, fragments of coffin-wood, &c., are seen lying in large quantities around these pits; and in that part of the ground where they are there is a small house, in which fires for some special purpose are constantly burning. In each of the pits of which I have spoken, about 15 bodies upon an average are deposited. Indeed, not long since 40 were placed in one of them. Between the topmost of the coffins in them, piled one upon another, and the general level of the ground, there is often not more than an interval of two feet or less."

On the general management of this burial-ground, which was considered as suburban, and for the improvement of which, as has been stated, a local Act of Parliament was obtained, Dr. Milroy observes—

"With a view of showing how utterly unfit a committee of gentlemen such as the Board of Trustees, in whom the nominal control and direction of the ground is vested by the local Act of Parliament, is for the performance of the duties assigned to it, I need scarcely observe, that no member of this Board knows anything respecting the ground, except what the sexton chooses to tell him. Even the secretary of the Board is not aware whether a plan or chart of the ground has ever been made or not. No supervision or attempt at any such thing seems ever to have been exercised on the proceedings of the sexton. He has merely been required to register the number of burials, and to account for all moneys received; the rest of the business has been left to his own discretion. And here it is worthy of notice, as an additional proof of the absurd and pernicious system of the existing management of this and several other parochial burial-grounds, that not only does the entire amount of the price of every grave vary in different parts of the churchyard according to the arbitrary division of it into different sections, but the apportionment of the fees among the different parties interested varies according as the grave happens to be situated in the old or in the new ground. A direct premium is thus given to the parish clerk and sexton—and especially to the latter, who, be it remembered, is the only person who knows anything about the ground, and to whom its management is almost entirely committed—to encourage burials in one part of the ground rather than in another. In the present

instance this part happens to be the old churchyard, which, as we have already seen, is declared by all parties to have been so full twenty years ago, that it should then have been closed for ever."

The preceding evidence, which affords an example of the general tenor of that which has been received, clearly shows,—from the present state of those burial-grounds which, under the direction of parish authorities, have been removed to suburban districts, from the enormous outlay incurred in such removal without any corresponding benefit, and from the occurrence of the old evils in almost their full force,—that experience offers no encouragement for any further trial of the plan of parochial management in dealing with the evils arising from the existing practice of interment.

10. And this is the last fact proved in evidence which it is necessary to adduce against the plan under consideration; namely, that it is a proposal to carry into effect changes which are to remedy certain evils by means of that precise agency under which those very evils have sprung up and have reached their greatest magnitude.

It is under this management—

That the practice has prevailed of interring numbers of the dead in single graves, in grave-pits, and in double graves; these receptacles being left open, or only covered with planks, until the piled-up coffins nearly reach the surface.

That the practice has prevailed of the burial of the dead without any registry of the situation where the ground has been opened, of the depth of the graves that have been dug, or of the number of the bodies that have been put into them, there being only one instance among the burial-grounds recently examined in which a record is kept of these particulars.

That the practice has prevailed of the burial of the dead without order and without supervision of any kind, neither the churchwardens nor the clergymen, in the great majority of instances, taking any charge of the burial-ground, but everything being left to the sexton and the grave-digger.

That, as one consequence of this deplorable neglect, the sexton and gravedigger on coming into office, knowing nothing of the condition of the ground and finding no one to give them information, have universally resorted to the practice of searching it with the borer, so that there is scarcely a single metropolitan churchyard where the gravedigger is not to be seen thrusting down his long searching-iron to discover where a spot can be found for an addition to the already surcharged earth,

"Whenever," says Dr. Milroy, "this instrument meets in its passage with no very strong obstruction, there a grave is forthwith dug; hence hundreds, and in some instances thousands, of bodies have been deposited in burial-grounds which would have been long since closed, had there been any one to take charge of the public safety;"

and hence also the pernicious practice of crowding together an immense number of bodies in one particular spot or portion of a

churchyard, and refusing to allow other parts to be opened where an opening might be made with comparatively little danger:—

"They persisted in this course," reports Dr. Milroy, "even during the prevalence of the late dreadful epidemic; but there was no one to direct and control the sextons, and it is charitable to believe that they did it ignorantly."

It is under this management that the practice has prevailed in numerous instances of permitting interments only on certain days of the week:—

"The inconvenience and even danger of this practice," reports Dr. Milroy, "were strongly felt during the prevalence of the cholera. Bodies were taken to the deadhouse, and sometimes to a common shed in the ground, and there left for two or three days before the funeral-service was performed. On one occasion I found a coffin, the lid of which was not even secured, lying on a bundle of wood in a shed awaiting interment. In the same graveyard, I was informed by some of the inhabitants of the houses overlooking it, coffins had repeatedly been left lying on the ground all night, in consequence of there being not room enough in the deadhouse."

It is under the same management that desecration of the dead has taken place, such as is exemplified in the following case, cited by Dr. Milroy:—

"A parishioner, who has had a family-grave for many years, lost his wife. He was advised by the parochial authorities to convert his grave into a brick vault. The ground was opened with this view. Three coffins, all in lead, which had been buried at different periods within the last 15 or 20 years, were taken up and were laid on the surface of the ground within a foot of the windows of adjacent houses until the completion of the work. Besides this, the coffins in the family-graves on each side were also exposed to view. The earth which was thrown out, and which (it is acknowledged) contained a quantity of human remains, was ordered by the churchwarden to be carted away to the quantity of eight cartloads, because, if it had been strewn upon the ground, it would have raised the surface of the graveyard above its present level, which is considerably above that of the lower floors of the neighbouring houses, whose windows overlook it! In this instance the churchwarden seems never to have suspected that there was anything objectionable in the whole proceeding."

And lastly,—in numerous instances the churchyards of London have been allowed, under the same management, to become so crowded with the dead that the surface of the ground is thickly strewed with human remains; whence it has become necessary to dig large and deep pits to receive the bones that are continually thrown up whenever the ground is opened, and thus to enable new interments to be made.

From recent examinations it appears that at the present time the ground is thus thickly strewed with human remains, among others, in St. Ann's, Blackfriars; Christ-Church, Westminster; Lock burial-ground; St. Mary's, Lambeth; Drury-lane burial-ground; St. Michael's, Queenhithe; and St. Giles's churchyard.

"In some instances," says Dr. Milroy, "as in St. Andrew-by-the-Wardrobe and St. Botolph Aldgate, common interments, not in lead, have been allowed to take place in the vaults under the churches, just as in an open graveyard. In other instances I have known churchwardens direct vaults to be cleared of their contents, in order to make room for fresh burials. In one case, so great had become the accumulation of disinterred bones that a space had been boarded off at one part of the churchyard for their reception; and there they had remained for a great many years until a few months ago, when the attention of the present churchwarden was accidentally called to the revolting nuisance by a dog having dragged some of the bones from the heap, and been seen gnawing at them.

"Occasionally graves have been dug in the inside of a church. The flooring has been taken up, one or two pews removed if necessary for the time, a grave dug, and the coffin deposited within two or three feet of the surface. To such an extent has this practice been followed in one instance that has come under my notice, that the church is no better than a graveyard; and so offensive are the effluvia in it that persons are often obliged to quit their pews during Divine service. The clergyman informed me that he seldom entered the church without being annoyed with the nauseous smell."

It is surely time to make other administrative arrangements, instead of allowing a practice to go on which has produced such revolting results; and in reconstructing a system which shall obviate the possibility of the recurrence of such things in future, it it is hardly expedient to have recourse to a machinery under which they have so generally prevailed and have reached so great a height.

The opinion of those who have attended to the subject is very decided against the adoption of a parochial machinery for carrying this object into effect.

Mr. Drew, the vestry-clerk and superintendent registrar of Bermondsey, states his conviction that persons nominated to carry into effect such a measure in parishes would not give satisfaction to the inhabitants, even if they were disposed to act.

Mr. Corder, the clerk to the Strand Union, stated that, though there is a strong and growing objection to the practice of interring in London and its immediate environs, yet that the expense of separate and distinct parochial cemeteries would be so severe as to induce parishes to submit to the evils of intramural interment rather than incur it, and that one of the chief advantages of having one or more cemeteries on a large scale, under one control, would be the proportional and great reduction of expense.

Mr. George Downing, a mechanic, and secretary to a burial society, thus represents the sentiments prevalent among persons of his own class on this subject:—

"The labouring classes are quite prepared to have interment in towns prohibited; it has been very much debated upon amongst them since the scenes in the churchyards have been made known. I am con-

fident that every man in our club would petition to have the bill carried. I find the opinion of the working-men is quite universal about it; but they would sell their beds from under them sooner than have any parish funerals: it is heartrending to them, and they would prefer any other officers to the parish officers."

Mr. Dix confirms this representation, stating his conviction that cemeteries on a national scale would be far more popular among the labouring classes than parochial burial-grounds, whether in the present grounds or others in the suburbs.

The Rev. William Stone observes,—

"A local Board would be less likely to possess the confidence of the people. Indeed, it would be exposed to the influence of personal interest and local partialities; and still more so if the majority of its members were in office for a year or two only. A Board of this kind may be said to exist already in my own parish, where a local Act of Parliament places the burial-ground in the hands of the parish officers. And it is but a few years since my attention was forcibly called to the insecurity of this local arrangement. A constant change in the majority of a local Board would be most unfavourable to uniformity of system, efficiency, and economy. By the time a member of it becomes efficient in his office, he is called upon to retire from it.

"A local Board would want many other advantages of a more publicly constituted authority. Supplied with members by the casualties of parochial office, it could not always command a high order of intelligence. It would necessarily be limited in its opportunities of observation; and, as it could not make its purchases and regulate its current expenditure to the same advantage as if it acted on a more extensive scale, it would, of course, prove less economical to the public."

"Further reflection," says the Rev. H. Milman, "leads me to the strong conviction that the parochial system, even if there were no difficulties in forming the union of the smaller parishes for this object, could only furnish so loose and uncertain a superintendence over an affair of such magnitude, and requiring such constant vigilance, as to be altogether inadequate to the purpose. It is not easy, with their present burthens and responsibilities, to fill the parochial offices with men competent to the duty, and with sufficient leisure to devote to it. They are usually filled by men in business of some kind, with considerable sacrifice of their time, and of that attention which is required by their personal concerns. These duties, however, are confined, onerous as they sometimes are, to their own immediate neighbourhood. But if we add to their responsibilities, the care of a remote and large churchyard, with all its complicated management, we impose upon them duties so arduous and so incompatible with their own interests and avocations, that the conscientious would shrink from undertaking them, and they would fall into the hands of a lower class of busy persons, anxious for notoriety, or with some remote view of advantage to themselves. It will be absolutely necessary to relieve the parish officers from a burthen which they cannot undertake without a sacrifice, which is more than can be expected from men engaged in business or in some of the active professions. Besides all this, the administration would be

constantly passing from one to another; the objection to the whole parochial system, that a man no sooner learns the duty of his office than he is released from it, would apply in a tenfold degree to an affair of such magnitude. The only way to secure the proper organization and conduct of a remote cemetery would be by officers, judiciously selected and adequately paid, who should devote their whole time to the business. Many of these objections, as the want of sufficient time without neglecting more serious duties, would apply to the clergyman of a large town parish, and, if the cemetery be made an object of parochial taxation, the less he is involved in it the better."

"I do not see," says Dr. Milroy, "how these and many other evils which attend the present state of burials in our parochial graveyards are to be rectified or prevented for the future by any existing parochial machinery. The question is, who is to superintend and regulate the interments? To what officer of a parish can this important duty be committed? The churchwardens are, I believe, the parties to whom, under the present state of things, it legally belongs. But, of course, it would be altogether unreasonable, and indeed absurd, to expect so onerous and responsible a task to be performed by officials who have neither the requisite leisure nor knowledge for the proper discharge of its duties. It is obvious that the public are at present made to pay much more than would suffice were there but one staff of officers belonging to a single large cemetery. Then comes the question, would it be expedient that a number of parishes should have a common burial-ground, the control and direction of which might be left to their united management? My strong conviction, drawn from my observation of the working of parochial boards, is that such a plan would never answer. Not to mention the possibility of constant disputations in a committee of united parishes, I do not see who is to be the party to whom the superintendence of the cemetery or common burial-ground is to be intrusted, and who is to be responsible to the parishes for the right performance of his duty. All parochial boards are from their very constitution fluctuating and liable to periodic changes;—this circumstance alone unfits them for the wise exercise of a directing or an executive power, in matters that require the utmost regularity and uniformity. Upon the whole, I beg to express my very strong conviction that it would be most impolitic to rest the direction and superintendence of burial-grounds in the hands of any parochial authorities, and for this simple reason, that the system has been tried and found to be as bad as anything can well be. Our parochial graveyards are, in my opinion, disgraceful to us as a nation on the score of decency, and pernicious on the score of public health.

"The system, too, besides being so objectionable in these important respects, is, I am convinced, a source of most oppressive and unequal expense, much of which might be saved under a more judicious management. At present there is nothing like uniformity in this respect in different parts of the metropolis."

"It is but right to state," concludes Dr. Milroy, "that, in my numerous interviews with parochial authorities in the metropolis on the subject of their graveyards, I have never met with a single person who upheld the existing state of things, and who has not expressed a wish to see a change introduced. It has been very generally remarked by

these gentlemen that it is high time that the legislature of the country should take up the consideration of the subject, and provide for the decent interment of the dead by some comprehensive measure, that would effectually put an end to the disgraceful proceedings which every one knows are being continually perpetrated in our present burial-grounds. Even sextons and gravediggers have not hesitated to acknowledge that it would be well if things could be managed otherwise than they are now; while they very fairly excuse themselves from being the cause of the evils complained of, by saying that their graveyard was so very bad when they first came into office, and that they have only carried out what they were required to do, when orders were given them to provide for all burials that were sent.

"There is a concurrent feeling among all classes of the community, that things cannot be allowed to remain in their present condition, and every one seems to be prepared for, and indeed anxiously expecting, a parliamentary scheme of extramural sepulture. The very numerous and most respectably signed memorials, which have within the last five or six months been addressed to the General Board of Health from all parts of the metropolis, sufficiently attest the truth of this statement; and so alive are the people now to the pernicious results of the present system, that in some districts the residents have begun to complain of even recently established burial-grounds in their neighbourhood, not so much for any actual nuisance already experienced from them, as from the conviction that in the course of a few years they must inevitably be productive of the same evils which older graveyards are well known to be at this moment producing in other neighbourhoods.

"I should say, therefore, that the prospect of a change, as regards our mode of interment, is looked forward to with great interest by all classes of persons in the metropolis, without exception; and, were it not from the apprehension of personal loss, either directly by the suppression of a source of private gain, or indirectly by the fear of an increase in parochial and local rates, I am convinced that not a single hand would be held up in favour of the present state of things, but that every person would hail the removal of burial-grounds to a distance from their dwellings with approbation and delight.

"There is another point to which I wish here to allude. The impression left on my mind from my experience during the last five months is, that, as a general remark, parochial authorities neither expect nor wish to retain any control or direction of burial-grounds at a distance from their parishes; nay, I believe that they would be quite pleased to be released from the unpleasant responsibility in respect of interments now imposed upon them.

"That several of the parochial Boards resisted the orders and regulations of the General Board of Health on the subject of their graveyards is quite true; but the opposition, I would say, arose in almost every case from the difficulty experienced in their being able to make arrangements at the moment for burials of parishioners, and especially of the poor, and also from the apprehended expense of the removal of burials to a distance under the present most extravagant rate of undertakers' charges. I have often heard it said by gentlemen at those very parochial meetings which most vehemently resisted the orders of the General Board of Health, that they should certainly like to see burials

within towns utterly discontinued, if once a suitable provision were made for extramural interments, while not a word was ever uttered as to their unwillingness that Government should take the matter completely into their own hands.

"Lastly, I may mention that in not a few of the metropolitan parishes very many of the most respectable inhabitants have, of late years, ceased to make use of their family-graves in their own parochial churchyards, and have preferred to incur the additional expense of purchasing a new family place of interment in one of the suburban cemeteries."

We submit that the arguments and evidence now adduced are conclusive against the plan of confiding to parishes, separate or in combination, the powers and duties involved in an improved system of interment.

Before proceeding to consider the second mode proposed for carrying into effect the requisite changes, it may be proper to advert to a principle which will be found to apply with as much force against the encouragement, for this purpose, of joint-stock companies, as private individuals; namely, that the interment of the dead is a most unfit subject for commercial speculation.

On an occasion which closes the visible scene of human existence, and which calls forth the most touching exercise of our affections under circumstances which often produce the severest suffering of which the human heart is susceptible, the obtrusion of the spirit, and the undisguised aim, of trade and gain is a desecration.

It is an occasion in which relatives and friends are placed in a position in which they are incapable of self-protection. Anxiety, natural feeling under the bereavement, nay, even common decency, as well as the urgency for the immediate performance of some of the last duties, prevent the friends of the deceased, on the occurrence of the fatal event, from going about from tradesman to tradesman, as if they were in the common market-place, and dealing with an article of commerce. Survivors are under the necessity of acting on the presumption, which we shall show it is in the power of the Legislature to make a reality, that there are settled and pre-appointed arrangements and terms to meet their wants, and that advantage will not be taken of so mournful an occasion to prey upon their necessities.

It is an occasion on which the greediness of gain can receive no check from relatives and friends, as in ordinary cases of business. The consequence is that funeral charges have become in the highest degree extortionate, and against this extortion it is not in the power of any private person to protect himself. All classes feel the bondage in which they are held. We may make allusion to one recent exalted and most admirable

example in the testamentary directions left by the lamented Queen-dowager; but other recent instances have come to our knowledge in which strenuous efforts have been made in that direction, as far as they could be attempted with propriety, but without success. The feeling of respect and reverence for a deceased relative often induces the best instructed to bear almost any amount of extortion, rather than that their wishes and motives should be misunderstood and misrepresented on such an occasion. "I have known people put up with any extortion," says a witness, himself one of the most extensive undertakers in the metropolis, "rather than dispute a bill for a funeral. In one instance the bill charged was 220*l.*—it should not have been more than 100*l.*; but families will put up with any extortion, as they did in this case, to prevent legal proceedings."

If, as is universally admitted, the interests of the public in general, but particularly of the poorer classes, require that the present excessive funeral charges should be reduced, it does not seem practicable to accomplish this object as long as interment is left as a subject of trading profit.

Among the class of undertakers there are highly respectable persons, and those of this character have admitted, against their own direct interest, the public advantage and necessity of the proposed changes. But it must, on the other hand, be stated that a large proportion of undertakers are persons of a very inferior class.

If it were even true of the whole class that they are of the highest respectability without any exception, that respectability would be no justification for the retention of numbers not required for the public service, thereby involving all persons in unnecessary and oppressive expense; but especially the poor; and that at a time, namely, at the period of their widowhood and orphanage, when they are the least able to bear it.

There are in the metropolis, according to the enumeration of the Post-Office Directory, upwards of 700 undertakers. On examining the persons the most extensively engaged in this branch of business it appears, however, that this enumeration is altogether defective. According to Mr. Bedford, the witness just referred to, there are hundreds that act as undertakers that are not down in the Directory as such. Mr. Sadler, another principal undertaker, says that there are in London at least 3000 men who call themselves undertakers, and who carry on the business. These, he states, consist of all sorts of persons—drapers, tailors, bakers, publicans, nay, even butchers; carpenters especially, almost without exception; all persons engaged in any way in wood; cabinet-makers, upholsterers, packingcase-makers, as well as appraisers, sextons, parish clerks, &c.

This number of persons, it is further stated, trade with the capital of about ten houses.

"We have," says Mr. Sadler, "500 customers on our ledgers, con-

sisting of upholsterers, appraisers, parish clerks, and tailors. We perform business for them at trade price, but we cannot control the prices charged by that class of men. We allow them a moderate profit, and give them the benefit of our capital. I do not think there are 20 houses in the metropolis where capital is employed in this trade. I know one man in the suburbs of London who writes up undertaker, and who keeps an invalid chair and a patent chair, and all the old nurses in the neighbourhood are in his pay. How am I to compete with such a man?"

The practice commonly adopted to obtain orders is thus described by Mr. Sadler:—

"One of the evils of the present system is the taking of commissions; there are medical men who do take commissions, and professional men also—lawyers. I have been a number of years in business, and I never asked for a funeral in my life; but have myself found three servants standing in my way on my leaving a house, and I have had to direct them to open the door before they would let me out. In many cases of noblemen's funerals I know that their confidential servants have been fee'd."

"I have often found," says Mr. Bedford, "when I went for instructions, that several cards had been left at the house by persons soliciting the funeral."

"I had a case in point the other day," states Mr. Shillibeer. "I had a funeral at Camden Town, and when I went to receive instructions the servant handed me a card. An undertaker had seen the shutters up, and had put his card under the door. I cannot get hold of that kind of funeral. The servants and upholsterers are standing between. If a nobleman or gentleman of fortune dies, the upholsterer generally knows it, and so steps in at once, and then goes to the undertaker. I should be happy to give undertakers 20*l.* or 30*l.* for such funerals. There was lately the funeral of a Mr. Townley, I think, in Yorkshire. A tailor, next door, got the funeral, and got 1000*l.* for it. And not more than six or seven weeks had elapsed before the widow likewise dies, and he obtains another 1000*l.* for her funeral."

It appears that for the interment of each corpse in the metropolis there are at least six undertakers waiting as competitors to be employed in the service. All the witnesses of the trade agree that the service required can be secured at a reasonable price only by limiting the number of persons engaged in it; that if six undertakers are kept, with their several establishments and servants, waiting for the chance of one funeral, the expense of the waiting must be charged on that one funeral when it is obtained, and that the burden of this needless expense must fall where there is no real power of resistance.

Mr. Bedford, who is in a large way of business, and whose house has performed as many as 2000 funerals in one year, being asked why he charged so much as eight shillings per diem for one attendant, replied,—

"Sometimes the men are waiting several days without a funeral; our men are piece-men, only some of them being paid by the week; taking the average, they do not earn more, I should think, than 30*s.* a-week; sometimes for two or three weeks they earn a good deal more, but at others we have three weeks pass without a funeral; the high price of funerals is a natural result, there is not enough otherwise to give any profit."

It was generally admitted by this class of witnesses that about 12 principal undertakers would be a sufficient number to direct the whole of the funeral service for the metropolis, but according to one of the witnesses four would suffice.

Here, then, we have the state of facts—of increasing numbers of competitors, increasing struggle, and an apparently violent competition, with *increased* prices; the reverse effect to that which according to the common economic theory must be the result of competition. The case is, however, anomalous; the competition is unreal, and is destitute of the element of free choice on the part of the purchaser of service. It is a struggle for the monopoly of each case.

By the arrangement we propose, offering classes of cases or service for tenders of contract, a real competition will be created under circumstances in which it may be effective. It is thus exemplified in the arrangements made at Paris, which one of the chief witnesses, an undertaker, refers to as practicable and eligible in the metropolis.

"The experience of Paris," says Dr. Sutherland, "affords a good illustration of the public benefits resulting from a free competition in conducting interments. The customary inducements to extravagant expenditure are removed by first deciding on the articles to be used, and then fixing the prices which the contractor is permitted to charge. The public has free selection as to the materials, but they cannot be charged more than the contract price. The tariff, once fixed by authority, is put up to public competition, and the contract sold to the person who will undertake to return the largest percentage on the funeral accounts.

"This sum is set apart for the support of public worship, and is paid over to the various churches and chapels of Paris. The following result of the competition for the present contract will show the manner in which the system operates:—

Names of Competitors.	Percentage offered to be returned.
	F. *c.*
M. Guesnier	50 0
M. Lemaistre	71 56
M. Baudoüin	67 55
M. Prevost	57 50
M. Sery	..
M. Béchet	45 $33\frac{1}{3}$
M. Raymond	62 45
M. Duprat	68 $72\frac{10}{100}$

"No less than 71½ per cent. of the present contract prices is paid over to the different 'fabriques' and 'consistoires' of the capital."*

The suggestion was preferred by some of the undertakers that, with a view to relieve the public from the excessive charges occasioned by so many superfluous traders, the numbers should be limited by licence.

"I think," says Mr. Sadler, "a licence confining the trade to a certain class of individuals who would be really and *bonâ fide* the tradesmen would be effective. Many would think it worth while to take out a licence; by such a plan you would lose the worthless members of the trade; the competition in the trade, and the anxiety of houses to maintain their reputation, would be the protection to the public; if the numbers were thus narrowed they could not make such charges, it would be utterly impossible; now men make the best of a job, and never expect to be employed again."

The witnesses being asked whether, if a large and constant business were secured to a few persons, the expense might not be very greatly reduced, they all agreed that the reduction would be in proportion to the extent of the business ensured to each and the certainty and regularity of the employment. The evidence of Mr. Bedford affords an example of the opinions entertained by this class of witnesses. He is asked—

"An arrangement to concentrate the business, so that such persons might be constantly employed, would enable a reduction of expense to the public, while there would be steady gain to the tradesmen, would it not?—Certainly.

"Any gain to the public must be effected by thus concentrating the business?—Yes, I have often thought so.

"Then you are of opinion that it would be an advantage to all parties to diminish the multitude of capitals now kept in this field of supply, and so to concentrate the business that fewer capitals might be engaged in it, and those constantly?—Certainly.

"It would enable the principal parties themselves to give the supply at a lower rate?—Yes; now not one-third of our time is employed.

"If interments were intrusted to any special body, and they were enabled to distribute contracts among the chief members of the trade, would it not enable them to diminish the cost of funeral arrangements?—Everything would depend on a constant amount of business being ensured.

"The whole benefit to the public must turn on the power to economize the amount of capital and labour to be applied in this direction?—Certainly.

"The effect would be to reduce the prices to the public, and at

* There are nine classes of interments, of which the cortège, or funeral procession, may be selected for comparison with our own. An example or two will suffice. A third-class funeral, very frequently used by respectable families, including hearse, eight mourning-coaches, a master of ceremonies, two officers, properly apparelled, to carry cushions with the insignia of the deceased, eight mourners and twelve torches, costs 15*l.* 7*s.* 6*d.* The cortège of the fourth class costs 9*l.* 3*s.* 4*d*; and that of the fifth class 5*l.* 7*s.* 6*d.* These prices include the percentage returned by the contractor.

the same time to get the service rendered in a more satisfactory manner?—Yes."

All this class of witnesses repeat emphatically that everything would depend, with reference to the diminution of the expense, on the amount and constancy of the business secured.

From the whole of the considerations and evidence now presented, we submit that it is established that the provision of the service for the interment of the dead is a most unfit subject for trading profit.

II.—The second mode by which it may be proposed to carry into effect the requisite changes is the encouragement of cemetery companies, such as Kensal Green, Norwood, &c. With reference to this mode of accomplishing the object, we beg to submit the following considerations:—

Cemetery companies being trading bodies, the argument against the principle of confiding the burial of the dead to trading speculation applies to them in its full force. The universal feeling is that the spirit of gain produces in these public companies similar results as in the private trader.

"I do sympathize," says the Rev. W. Stone, "with the common repugnance to consign to joint-stock companies the solemnities of Christian burial; and I believe that this repugnance is not more common than it is strong. 'And so,' said a highly intelligent gentleman, pointing to a cemetery of this class, 'the time is come when Christian burial is made an article of traffic.'

"So far as the trading principle is involved, the joint-stock company is no better than the private speculator. However disinterested may have been the motives which have induced some to become shareholders in these companies, and I have been assured upon authority which I respect that many have done so without any expectation or hope of profit upon their shares, yet the primary and effective character of these associations is undeniably that of trading associations, and they cannot be rescued from that character by even numerous individual exceptions. Their managers, like the proprietors of the private grounds, are assiduous in soliciting attention to their lists of prices; and affiches, painted in large letters, and placed at various outlets of the metropolis, with genuine mercantile officiousness, direct the public, as in a case close by my own parish, 'To the E. L. Cemetery, only one mile and a half.' Surely we may say that this system also involves much that is inconsistent with reverential impressions of the sanctity of burial, much that must either offend or deteriorate the better feeling of our population."

"Private speculation looks for a return of profit for its invested capital," says the Rev. H. Milman. "To my mind there is something peculiarly repugnant in joint-stock burial and cemetery companies."

We believe that the concurrence in the opinion here expressed is very general among all classes of the people.

It is certain that these companies have hitherto effected no appreciable diminution of the existing evils. It is now upwards of twenty years since the first metropolitan cemetery was opened. The preceding account of the burial-grounds of London is derived from an examination of them within the last few months. It is plain, therefore, that the influence of the cemeteries, in mitigation of the evils which so urgently call for redress, has been next to nothing. From evidence hereafter to be recited (see page 96) it appears that practically the whole amount of relief afforded by all the metropolitan cemeteries taken together, from their first establishment up to the present time, is the extension of the burial-grounds of the metropolis by 17 acres. Whatever may be the causes of the slight amount of benefit which they have afforded—and these we shall immediately endeavour to assign—the fact is indisputable.

One of the most obvious of these causes is, that sanitary improvement is not the primary object of these companies, and that the pursuit of the primary object has led to the neglect of the subordinate. That, on account of this natural tendency, there is an inherent and incurable defect in the principle of cemetery companies, with reference to their public usefulness, is, we think, fully proved by the evidence of a witness who has not only had the best opportunities of forming an opinion, but who has deliberately expressed his conviction to this effect under a sense of official responsibility: —

"I have been," says E. H. Whalley, Esq., "a director of the principal cemetery company of the metropolis since 1841. It has the largest capital of any, and two cemeteries, Highgate and Nunhead.

"I have also had opportunities of considering the subject in the course of the preliminary inquiry under the Private Bill Act, having had the sole management of the inquiry for six private cemetery bills.

"With a view to render the information collected by me on the preliminary inquiries available in the consideration of any general measure, I have thought it might be useful to give an explanatory summary of these reports. In the Woodford Metropolitan Cemetery Report, and the other cases, I gave the evidence in a digested form, under the heads prescribed to me by the Woods and Forests."

Being asked, "Does your experience, and the experience of others who, like yourself, have gone into the subject rather from its public interest than from any return as a pecuniary speculation, favour the expectation that the sanitary objects of interment could or would be carried out by the existing or by any similar trading companies?"—this witness answers, "For a long period I entertained the hope that the objects of sanitary reform would, to a great extent, be carried out by giving encouragement to trading companies, and removing all possible impediments to the establishment of cemeteries, and that, at all events, a further trial should be afforded by such means; and I have so expressed myself in the supplementary Report on Kingston-upon-Hull.

"This was in 1847, before the Public Health Act passed empowering

the closure of burial-grounds and preventing new ones. I have since that repeatedly endeavoured to carry out in the company with which I am connected what I conceived to be the intention of the Legislature, by affording facilities to the public for availing themselves of the cemeteries. I have had opportunities also of seeing at Chester and Leicester what would be the effect on the public mind of closing existing burial-grounds, without making a public provision for others, and the conclusion I have come to is, that, wherever there is competition, the undertakers will, from the peculiar circumstances in which they are placed, control the cemeteries so far as to prevent them from affording any remedy for the existing evils beyond what they have hitherto effected; and where there is no competition, I think the monopoly will be so absolute as to afford no chance to the public for retaining any accommodation beyond what is absolutely necessary, coupled with powers as to charges and other matters which will more than any other cause embitter the public against the change. Instead of making the change from intramural interments and all other incidental evils work smoothly and peaceably, it will light up animosity and prejudice which will render any subsequent interference of Government extremely difficult and far less likely to be effectual than at present."

He observes further, with reference to the inquiry on the Woodford Metropolitan scheme,—

"It is remarkable that, although I caused notice to be given to all the companies of the inquiry, but two were represented, and they treated the scheme with indifference, and merely expressed their opinion that any attempt to carry out the sanitary objects mentioned in the Interment Report of 1843 would, in a commercial view, fail. —(Q. 1260, *Minutes of Evidence, Woodford.*)

"This, together with my knowledge of the constitution of several of these companies, and of the influences which are brought to bear upon them by those who have an interest in the present system of funereal forms, satisfies me that competition and commercial enterprise will never afford a remedy for the existing evils.

"The grounds of this opinion will appear more in detail hereafter, but I would here take occasion to observe that it is with regret that I have found myself compelled to adopt this conclusion. Like many others, I have long taken an interest in cemeteries, in the belief that they would not be an exception to the characteristic energy and success of commercial efforts in this country to supply all wants and remedy all substantial abuses.

"In the Supplementary Report on Kingston-upon-Hull (1847), in which I reviewed the inquiries of that year, I took occasion to make the following observation in reference to the evils of intramural interment, and the remedy of joint-stock company cemeteries:—

"'That this remedy has not realized the expectations of those by whom such new burial-grounds were established may be inferred from the present unremunerative character of most of these undertakings, and, on that ground, I assume they have hitherto proved inadequate as a remedy for the evils of intramural interment; such is notoriously the

case in the metropolis, as I have fully explained in my Report on the Woodford Cemetery Bill.'

"Still I continued to entertain the hope that, by affording facilities for conveyance to the cemeteries, by relaxing some of the restrictions which rendered it so difficult to procure land, and, above all, in reliance on the companies finding it to be their interest or their duty, either from fear of competition, or otherwise, coupled with the extreme probability that, if no further efforts were made by them, the matter must be taken into the hands of some public authority, that the objects for which Parliament had given them their powers would be effected by them. I am now of opinion, after the experience of two years, during which I have brought these views to the test in every way in my power —I am very earnestly of opinion—that any further delay in taking the matter up will only increase the difficulty of ultimately doing so; just as what may be regarded as the experiment of joint-stock cemeteries has already increased the difficulties of the question.

"I have repeatedly urged the appointment of committees, and by other means endeavoured to extend the management to many of the points mentioned in that (the Interment) Report, especially as to reception-houses at the cemeteries, economising conveyance and funeral management generally, making the grounds attractive and available for the resort of the public, and in other respects carrying out what has always appeared to me to have been the intention of Parliament in granting us the powers we have.

"I do not think that the Board with which I am connected is at all insensible or indifferent to these objects, but I attribute their systematic disregard of all such considerations—first, to a sense of incapacity to follow out the details in which such attempts would involve them; and, secondly, the determined opposition which would probably arise amongst the shareholders to any course which would interfere with the existing system of funerals."

In confirmation of the decided opinion thus expressed, it must be stated that there is not one of the new cemeteries in which some of the worst of the old evils are not continued, nor one in which even the main and recognised principles of improvement are carried into practice.

In all of them, for example, there is perpetuated the error of encouraging entombment as distinguished from inhumation, an error to which the public attention had been drawn in the Interment Report of 1843; the unsound policy and the sanitary evils of the practice having been there fully exposed.

"On my inquiry as to a new cemetery proposed to be established at Woodford," says Mr. Whalley, "it appeared that out of 260 acres, the extent of such cemeteries at that period (1847), not more than 90 acres had been opened for graves. The remainder is at present unproductive to the proprietors, while the public appear to have been scarcely to any perceptible degree benefited, even by the use of the 90 acres; it appearing, on the same inquiry, that the evils of the ancient system, both moral and physical, were steadily on the increase.—*See* p. 7, *Woodford Report.*

"Of the 150 acres which the Woodford cemetery was to comprise, the following was the proposed appropriation:—

For tombs in perpetuity or for terms of years .	35 acres.
For single interments	57 acres.
For paupers	8 acres.

The remainder, consisting of 50 acres, was unappropriated, on account of its liability to floods.

"In the case of the Newbury cemetery, out of 4 acres 1 rood 33 perches, it was proposed to appropriate space sufficient for 874 tombs in perpetuity.

"In the case of Chester cemetery, one of the directors stated that, 'with respect to poor persons, the object was to make the fees at as low a rate as possible consistent with defraying the current expenses, the company looking to graves of a superior description and to catacombs for payment of the interest.'—*See* p. 15, *Chester Report.*

"I believe that a very large proportion of the 90 acres of the cemeteries (of the metropolis) already used is so alienated in perpetuity; and I know that the apparent profits that arise from such sale of the soil itself, in preference to the sale of the use of it, as in what are called common interments, is one reason for the companies not affording facilities for, if not actually discouraging, the use of their grounds by the poorer classes.

"For my own part, I have always regarded this as unfair to the shareholders themselves, it being, in fact, a continual appropriation of the corpus or capital of the company for the purpose of increasing the apparent income."—*See* p. 20, *Woodford Report, and Evidence*, 197 to 205.

Again, the new cemeteries adopt the practice of interring more than one body in one grave, taking no new precautions for the protection of the public health against the noxious emanations that must escape from the frequent re-opening of the graves.

That this principle is recognised as a fundamental one by cemetery companies, is shown by the following announcement of the directors of Kensal-green:—"The directors of the General Cemetery Company," they say in the Report, p. 8, "knowing the difficulty as well as the expense of obtaining ground for burial (as a cemetery always depreciates the property around), and contemplating that a Bill may pass to prohibit burials in the crowded metropolis, offer seven acres of their ground at Kensal-green, adjoining the cemetery, for the burial of the poor, under such regulations as may be thought advisable."

"It has been found," they add, "that seven acres will contain about 138,500 graves; each grave will receive ten coffins; thus accommodation may be provided for 1,335,000 deceased paupers."

Here it is proposed to inter ten coffins in one grave, and to bury 1,335,000 bodies in seven acres of land—a proposition which, to say the least, indicates no improvement beyond the double graves of the metropolitan parish burial-ground, or the grave-pits of Liverpool and Manchester.

"I know," says Mr. Whalley, "that such is the practice (of interring in grave-pits) at the cemeteries; but it being left to the superintendents, and not coming before the Board, I am not able to give any further details than that I believe all 'common interments' take place in deep graves, from 14 to 20 feet, which are filled to within about 7 feet of the surface with adults, and two or three children over that; thus eight to twelve, or even more, coffins are put in before the grave is filled up; the cost of such grave is from 14*s.* to 20*s.* The cost of a single grave of 7 feet is about 5*l.*

"The practice is very fully detailed in the Report and Evidence on Woodford (*see Report*, page 7, *and Evidence*, 2, 547 *et seq.*), and is carried to a most revolting extent in the churchyards, and cannot be justified anywhere.

"The object is economy of labour and space, and it is one of those instances where commercial interests and sanitary and moral objects must inevitably be at variance."

Further, the new cemeteries have paid little or no attention to the several conditions requisite to render the site chosen for interment fit for the purpose.

In proof of this, Mr. Whalley refers to the cases of the Woodford, Highgate, and Nunhead cemeteries:—

"As showing the carelessness with which an enterprise of this kind may be set on foot, I refer," he says, "to the Woodford Report, from which it appears that the land which had been provisionally purchased by the Company was subject to the following incidents: *first*, a railway company had obtained powers to take for their purposes a portion of the land crossing through the centre of the proposed cemetery; *second*, there was a footpath from one extremity to the other now in use, and another footpath recently closed, but which might be re-opened, it having been closed without authority; *third*, a considerable portion of the ground was subject to be covered by water *in the winter* season, the remedies for which, as proposed by the promoters, appeared to me to be speculative. The two first objections, the railway and footpath, would, but for the preliminary inquiry and view of the ground, never have been heard of until the cemetery had been authorised, and perhaps nearly completed; and as to the flooding, it was almost impossible to calculate the expense which the shareholders, with some show of reason, might have been put to, to remedy this natural defect of the situation.

"As to Nunhead and Highgate, I am quite satisfied that the ground was selected and laid out without that practical knowledge and forethought that a private individual acting for himself, or a public officer under a due sense of his responsibility, would have brought to bear upon so important a part of the arrangements.

"Any extravagance or error in the first or subsequent outlay on a cemetery I find the shareholders and directors commonly consider they are entitled to visit upon the public. Thus I have been frequently met, when urging a reduction of fees to the poorer classes, by reference to the actual cost of our grounds; and I have no doubt, if the Woodford Cemetery had gone forward, and the circumstances to which I have before adverted had led to an outlay of double the intended capital, as

the catacombs and other errors at Highgate actually did, that it would have been considered a good reason for an equivalent rise in the estimate of fees on which the Bill was obtained; that is, provided any excuse was required."

Cemetery companies have hitherto afforded no relief from the oppressive expense of funerals, and it is in vain to look to them for any such relief; first, because, their primary object being to benefit the shareholders, no diminution in the expense of funerals can be thought of until the essential object of making a good return on the capital invested is secured; and secondly, because all these companies are under the control of persons whose interest it is to prevent any diminution in the cost of funerals. It is proved by the evidence of numerous witnesses that the principal, or at all events the most active, members of joint-stock cemetery companies are undertakers. It is further shown that this class of shareholders possess the means of influencing the prosperity and success of the company so materially as to have the directors completely under their control.

"The tradesmen who take the most prominent part at the public meetings of the shareholders," says Mr. Whalley, "are undertakers. I do not know what proportion of the shareholders may be undertakers, but the most prominent speakers at the general meetings are undertakers.

"Judging from the care which my colleagues at the Board take not to do anything which can give offence to that class, I presume that they are considered to be a very influential portion of our constituents.

"At the same time there is a further motive for not interfering with the undertakers in the paramount influence which they are supposed to exercise in the selection of the cemetery to which their burials are taken, and this may account for an influence on the shareholders beyond what their actual numbers could exercise."

Of the manner in which this class of shareholders use their power to prevent any change in the expense of funerals, an illustration is afforded by the part which they have taken in obstructing the introduction of a cheaper mode of conveyance to the cemetery.

"Four or five years ago," states Mr. Whalley, "some two or three members of the Board started Mr. Shillibeer, and with some trouble obtained a loan for him out of the funds of the Company of 300*l*. This circumstance created so strong a feeling at the shareholders' meetings that it nearly broke up the Board; the money, however, having been repaid, it blew over, but at almost every meeting since some undertaker refers to it as an outrageous abuse of the directors' powers."

The account given by Mr. Shillibeer himself of the opposition offered by undertakers is as follows:—

"As I had had much experience in cheapening vehicular transit, having originated and established the omnibus in England, I turned my attention to the subject of an economic carriage to perform the

duties of the old hearse and mourning-coach with one vehicle only, and in September 1841 I obtained Her Majesty's letters patent for my invention, and immediately set one only going, to try the feelings of the public upon the subject. The undertakers all set themselves against it, and did all they could to prevent its use. So strong and illiberal was the opposition to my patent funeral carriage on the part of all the undertakers, that they actually have refused to bury persons who had in their wills directed to be interred by 'the Shillibeer,' as my patent carriage is called.

"At first I had only poor Irish to bury; now I have officers and persons of a similar class. I had three of my carriages yesterday at Greenwich and Woolwich."

He adds the following exemplification of the manner in which the opposition of the undertakers acts upon the cemetery companies:—

"I have tried," he says, "to impress it upon the cemetery authorities that they ought to keep bearers ready at each cemetery; that there ought to be a staff of men in readiness at each cemetery. I have often said to them, 'I cannot carry out my project unless you assist me.' They have answered, 'We do not want to assist you; that would offend the undertakers, who are all against cheap funerals.'"

Mr. Whalley confirms the statement made by other witnesses, that the cemetery companies give to undertakers a percentage (five per cent.) on the funerals brought to their ground.

"It has been long a matter of discussion whether this allowance should be given to the undertaker who has the management of any funeral, or only to those who bring the order for the funeral.

"This has been the subject of several meetings of the different boards, in which they seem to have endeavoured each one to get the others to take the step of refusing or limiting the commission, reserving to themselves the patronage of the undertakers by giving them their usual fee.

"This as well as other instances shows that the cemetery companies feel themselves at the mercy of the undertakers, and I believe it practically is so."

Next, these companies are ineligible, because they cannot possibly perform the whole of the services required, on the systematic performance of which, as a whole, the means of diminishing the expense of funerals mainly depends.

Mr. Whalley being asked,—

"Was it ever considered a matter of importance that the companies should undertake the whole charge of conveyance of the removal of the body, including the provision of a coffin and materials and service of undertaker up to the actual interment throughout, comprising the management of the whole throughout, and charge for the whole in one bill?—*A.* I am not aware of this having been before the Board as a definite proposition for adoption. I have often discussed the subject with individual members of the Board, and, so far as the conveyance of the body to the cemetery, have

uniformly considered it to be practicable and expedient for the Company to undertake that duty, directly or indirectly; but I have never met with any sufficient support; and looking at it in a commercial point of view, I think the Board may have been quite right in rejecting it. First, because it involves details which the constitution of the Board could not manage efficiently; and, secondly, because every member that supported it would probably have been excluded from the direction by the opposition of the shareholders, who have always appeared to be under the control or the fear of undertakers, and other interests dependent upon the present system.

"*Q.* 10. What are your opinions as to the advantages of that course as a whole? — *A.* I understand the question to be, whether it would be practicable or expedient for the Company to become undertakers in addition to their present position as owners of the burial-grounds; and, for the reasons before given, I think it would be neither practicable nor expedient.

"As companies they have at present no power directly to embark their capital in the business of undertakers.

"If such powers were conferred upon them, and they thought fit to exercise them, I do not think it would accomplish the sanitary and moral objects contemplated by the Interment Report of 1843, or any material portion of them. They would, in the metropolis, become, on a large scale, what undertakers who have grounds of their own are at present, and in the provinces they would have a monopoly which, under the operation of the Public Health Act, would require as complete a control and supervision as would of itself more effectually accomplish the objects in view.

"Those objects I conceive to be, the providing for all classes, and for the poor especially, an economical and rational scale of charges and form of funeral, and some disinterested party to give effect to the same. And further, as to the public, to prevent the undue retention of the body in the rooms and dwellings of the poor, and its ultimate deposit, with such regard to the sanitary and moral interests of the public as, having been long in use on the Continent, were fully explained in the Report of 1843.

"That such objects are in themselves both practicable and expedient is sufficiently proved by the practice of every civilized country except our own; and however inefficient the cemetery companies may have proved for attaining these objects, they one and all acknowledge the importance, and, 'as far as private enterprise' can effect, have, I believe, endeavoured to promote the same. Whether they have had a full and fair trial I think is not so material as whether by conferring upon them further powers they are likely to accomplish them; and the fact that they have neither in the special Acts which have been before me, nor in any general Act, even solicited powers for that purpose, is, as it appears to me, conclusive that any further experiments in that direction, thrust, as they would be, upon unwilling parties, would utterly fail, and tend rather to defeat the remedies already provided by the Public Health Act than to effect any further remedy of the existing evils.

"As well in my capacity as a director of a cemetery company as in the preliminary inquiries, I have limited my views to the

question how far it was practicable to make cemeteries available for these purposes, and I have always felt that under any circumstances, or with any powers that could be asked or conceded to them, they must fall very short of achieving the results attained in most other countries."

Neither have the cemeteries effected the slightest improvement of any kind in respect to the interment of the poor. Indeed, the promoters of the Woodford scheme founded the necessity of it on the alleged fact that—

"The present cemeteries are quite useless as a means of supplying the wants of burial-places for the poorer classes, their regulations and charges not being of a kind to encourage that class of burials."

It is stated that no improvement in this direction is to be looked for in future, because any improvement in this respect—

"could only arise from one of two causes; either by the competition of new cemeteries, conducted in conformity to the Interment Report, as was stated to be the intention in the Woodford case, or by the companies finding it to be their interest to change their present regulations and scale of charges, so as to make them available for the poorer classes."

The failure of previous schemes renders it very improbable that any such competition will arise; and for the reasons already assigned there is no hope that the companies will, or can make such an alteration in the scale of charges as to bring them within the reach of the poorer classes.

"I have taken the preliminary inquiries for five provincial Bills," says Mr. Whalley, "four of which have passed.

"In all these cases the promoters have claimed credit for acting entirely for the benefit of their respective localities, and not from commercial views of advantage. Nevertheless, the scale of fees has invariably been higher than was before paid, and this has been coupled with powers more or less stringent of closing the existing burial-grounds.

"I have in every case felt strongly this difficulty, that while, on the one hand, a cemetery was, in each case, an object of vast importance to the public interests of the place, such cemetery could not be secured without exposing all classes, and especially the poorer classes, to expenses and inconveniences which they have no means of estimating at present or controlling hereafter. The powers which are now asked and given to respectable persons, who, as they allege unwillingly tax themselves in establishing the cemetery, may and naturally will fall into hands which will use them to the utmost for their own benefit.

"Judging from the uniform declaration of the promoters of these five Bills, they would greatly prefer that some public authority should have taken the business in hand, and if this were done at once probably the same feeling might be found to exist.

"There is this further reason also as to the provincial cemeteries, that they will become to all intents a monopoly of the most oppressive kind, seeing that the demand for burial-ground might be limited and thus

prevent competition, and that the Company cannot be materially injured by any neglect or abuse of their powers any more than benefited by the reverse."

In the Woodford Report there is much evidence as to the sentiments of the poorer classes with respect to interment, all tending to show that that class, which is supposed to be the most prejudiced in favour of existing habits, would readily adopt any change that would relieve them from the present system; and further, that no effectual relief has been afforded, or is likely to be, by the existing cemeteries.

"In the case of Woodford it appears that in many of the metropolitan grounds there is a great difference in the charge for different parts of the ground, and that these 'first, second, and third' portions, varying in the proportion of one to three, have no reference to the nature of the ground, but merely 'because the various classes shall be kept apart.' While, on the one hand, distinctions of this kind are calculated to inflict pain and dissatisfaction amongst the poorer classes, they must suggest strongly to their minds the want of sympathy on the part of their superiors, in an affliction which is supposed to level all distinctions of class."

The vain efforts made by the poor to relieve themselves from the oppressive evils under which they at present suffer in relation to this whole matter, are thus forcibly depicted:—

"The sacrifices which the poorer classes make for this purpose, resulting as they do in oppression and injustice to themselves, and the consequent reaction, tending to demoralization of every kind, extending even to murder and infanticide, is perhaps the most conclusive proof that can be adduced of the necessity of affording them some public protection against the evils which they so vainly endeavour by their own exertions to avert.

"That these burial societies are supported by a desire for an ostentatious display, may, to a certain extent, be true, but I feel satisfied, from my inquiries and observation amongst that class, that this is not the main object; it is a much more laudable and sensible object, viz. to prevent as far as possible the inexpressible misery, wretchedness, and ruin, which must fall upon their relicts in their efforts to find money or credit for the decent discharge of the painful duties which follow an event in itself probably a source of the greatest misery, depression, and present incapacity for exertion. The instances of this kind which must be constantly occurring to every poor man amongst his friends and neighbours must leave an impression which it is difficult for those not exposed to like dangers fully to appreciate; thence the otherwise incomprehensible delusions and impostures to which they willingly submit themselves.

"It is difficult for any one to appreciate the force of this evidence, or the claims which the poorer classes have on public protection, without carefully perusing the collection of facts set forth in the Public (Interment) Report of 1843, page 55 *et seq.*

"I also beg to refer to the Report on Woodford Cemetery, page 8,

and to the evidence of Harding, an undertaker, questions 490 *et seq.*, and that of Dr. Marsden, 809 *et seq.*"

The practical difficulties in the way of effecting any beneficial changes by the present companies, or by any others actuated by the spirit of commercial enterprise, are thus summed up by Mr. Whalley:—

"1. That where there is competition between burial-grounds, it is not good policy, as I have stated before, to alter the existing system of funerals; and where there is no competition, such details are attended with trouble and cost, without any adequate return. Add to which, incapacity of a Board of management to grapple with details without much higher remuneration for themselves, and more costly superintendence, than such small capital will afford.

"2. That further powers are required than the parties have hitherto thought fit to ask for, or than probably would be conferred upon a trading company by Parliament.

"3. I conceive that the requisite experience, coupled with independence of local prejudices, is not to be relied upon in joint-stock companies, or even in mere local management of any description, for introducing favourably a system so opposed to existng habits, and conflicting necessarily with existing interests and feelings.

"The interests of joint-stock companies and the interests of the public are now, and, so far as any practical remedy that I can suggest, ever will be, at variance in the following points:—

"1st. Public health requires that cemeteries should be reasonably distant from dwellings.

"2nd. Sanitary as well as social interests require that graves should not be too deep; separate interments and inhumation in preference to entombment.

"3rd. All classes, and the poor especially, require aid and protection against all needless delay and cost in the burial of the dead."

"Private interests require them as near as possible where there is competition, and as far as possible where there is none.

"Whether with or without competition, the greatest profit will accrue from burying 10 to 20 in one deep grave, and in selling the soil itself rather than the use of it.

"The undertakers, against whom this protection is required, may become the owners, and are always the patrons, of joint-stock cemeteries."

"I have no desire," says Dr. Sutherland, "to underrate the value of private enterprise, but I think that, if there be one thing more than another which does not legitimately come within its sphere, it is the guardianship of the dead of a great nation, and the reverent care of all the affections, memories, and aspirations which ought to surround them. The time has surely come when all trafficking in the spoils of poor humanity should cease, and when the whole process of interment should be undertaken as a solemn and pious duty, which society owes equally to the remains of all her members, however exalted or however humble."

It must be stated in conclusion that the new cemeteries have done little in improving the last services performed for the dead.

The cemeteries themselves are generally in more open spaces and more secluded spots; in two or three of them the ground is undulating, and the views beyond their own boundaries are extended and beautiful; they all present a more pleasing appearance to the eye; the funeral service in all of them is performed in what would be commonly admitted to be a respectable manner, and always, we believe, by a respectable clergyman; but on the other hand, it has been justly stated that the inferior attendants, the gravediggers and others, appear, as they usually do at the parochial grounds, in a disorderly condition—unshaven, dirty in person, in dirty shirts, in their common filthy dresses; that, during the burial service, the undertaker's men concern themselves only in removing the feathers from the hearse and preparing for an immediate return; that all the attendants begin talking on other matters, and go their different ways, immediately the coffin is lowered; and that the mourners are left with the utmost unconcern, except, indeed, by the gravediggers, who often follow them in the attitude of the usual solicitations of money for drink.

From the evidence thus presented, we submit that the great objects in view, the removal of the existing sanitary evils, the diminution of the expense of funerals, especially to the poor, and "the re-investment of the funeral service, and of the sacred abode of the dead, in their due solemnity and religious influence," are not and cannot be secured by joint-stock cemetery companies.

III.—The third mode by which it may be proposed to carry into effect the requisite changes is the appointment of a Public Commission, or Board, responsible to the Crown and to Parliament for the exercise of its duties and powers.

In favour of this plan it may be argued—

That these public officers would be bound to acquire the requisite knowledge of the principles and details of the department of the public service they would be called upon to administer.

That they would be bound to the performance of this and their other duties by a direct and personal responsibility—a principle under the control of which neither parochial boards nor the directors of joint-stock companies can be brought.

That the greatness of the scale on which the arrangements would be made would give them simplicity, uniformity, efficiency, and economy.

That the saving of expense in all ways would be so great, that there would be ample means of interring even the very poorest with increased propriety and solemnity.

That several of the requisite changes—such, for example, as the removal of the body by the proposed line of river conveyance, with

the system of intermediate reception-houses—could not be carried into effectual operation by any but a single authority.

That there is no other mode by which the scheme of sepulture proposed can be carried into effect as a whole, and administered as one system under one direction and control.

There appears to be a general concurrence of opinion in favour of this mode of carrying the object into effect on the part of those who have paid the most earnest attention to the subject. All the witnesses examined by us concur in the following decided expression of opinion:—

The Rev. W. Stone:—"From all my observation I am led to hope that, in the removal of the interment of the dead from populous towns, the Legislature will adopt, not a parochial, but a comprehensive plan for the purpose: a national plan placed under a departmental control of Government."

The Rev. H. Milman:—"It must unquestionably be a Government measure in its management as well as its organization. If you have understood my evidence as recommending parochial rather than a general administration, such was not my intention. On the wise and maturely considered organization, and on the provision for the careful, constant, and vigilant superintendence of the whole system, will depend entirely its fulfilment of its great objects."

Dr. Milroy:—"I believe that insuperable difficulties will be experienced in putting a stop to the abominable system of private burial-grounds, got up as a money speculation, in the heart of large towns and a crowded population, unless the general direction of cemeteries be vested in a Government or national board, and not in any local or municipal committee. From the best attention which I have been able to pay to the subject, I am brought to the conclusion that, if it be determined by the Legislature to carry into effect the much-required establishment of extensive cemeteries in the neighbourhood of the metropolis and other large cities, the control and superintendence of those works must be vested in a central Board responsible for the right discharge of its duties to the highest public authority, that of the Legislature."

Mr. Whalley:—"The advantages of placing the present cemeteries of the metropolis under public management would be, as I conceive, first, that these cemeteries would thereby become available for the relief of the graveyards of the metropolis; more available permanently for the purpose of sepulture, instead of being withheld *now* from public use in the hope of realizing a larger immediate profit by alienating them as much as possible in perpetuity. It would be advantageous to transfer these cemeteries to public management, because there is no prospect of their becoming more useful while under commercial management.

"I consider that a Board consisting of commercial men, whose time and attention are fully occupied by their own affairs, is altogether ill adapted for the management of a cemetery; there is no possibility of giving them adequate remuneration, out of so small a concern, for the time and attention required, even if they were thoroughly qualified. The Boards meet generally but once a-month.

"All the incidents of a cemetery pointed out in the Public Report of 1843 are totally incompatible with the kind of superintendence and

management that a Board can give, and this, I apprehend, is one reason why they have never been attempted, and probably never will be, by joint-stock companies.

"Whether the superior attention and skill of individuals are likely to accomplish sanitary objects may be inferred from the undertakers' burial-grounds.

"Whether the object be profit to the shareholders or the promotion of sanitary and moral improvement, I consider that few subjects demand such close and continuous attention to details as the management of a cemetery. We occasionally, at the general meeting, receive a lecture from some undertaker, that we know nothing about our business; and I have heard comparisons drawn between the unproductiveness of our cemeteries and the great profits derived from private burial-grounds owned and managed by undertakers.

"This class of burial-grounds are the very worst, in a sanitary point of view, in the metropolis, and they are also the most profitable.

"However widely different may be the constitution of public cemeteries and these private grounds, and whatever may be the cause of the former not having yet become so profitable as the latter, I think the fact is material to the question whether the public interests in regard to burial-grounds can be safely intrusted, like other commercial affairs, to be worked out by individuals or companies actuated by views of private gain.

"It is with great reluctance, and after much pecuniary sacrifice, that I have come to the conclusion that they cannot."

As the result of his recent inquiries into the law and practice of the Continent, Dr. Sutherland states,—

"In all the cities visited, the Governments have provided by very stringent laws and regulations for the decent burial of the dead, and to prevent imposition on the living; at Frankfort the conducting of funerals is placed in the hands of a commission; at Munich it is under the magistrates; it is the same in other towns. The various bodies intrusted with these important functions issue regulations and see to their execution. They bury the dead according to a fixed charge, in a variety of classes, so as to suit the means of all classes of families, leaving at the same time ample liberty as to extra matters of expense. In some cases the charges include all the items of expense; in others, only the removal and conveyance of the dead from the house to the place of interment.

"The principle of conducting these arrangements is the following:—The Government has provided that all may be buried at certain fixed rates if the families see fit; but it leaves them to depart from the rates in certain matters if they choose. A poor family may bury at the lowest prescribed rate, and yet spend as much again on the coffin. A first-class funeral may take place in a public grave. In short, there is ample liberty of action, with security against imposture within the prescribed rates; and in Paris the price of every additional article that custom can require is carefully tariffed. On a careful consideration of the experience which has been obtained abroad, I have arrived at the conclusion that the necessary changes can only be carried out under Government authority. A vigilant,

responsible, and perfectly disinterested management is indispensably necessary, whether it be to prevent injury to the public health, or for the becoming disposal of the dead. These duties are so directly of a public nature, that they can never with propriety be delegated to private enterprise. I know of no instance abroad in which the state has vested its own responsibilities in this respect in any irresponsible officer or joint-stock company."

From the considerations and evidence which we have thus presented, we have arrived at the following conclusions, which we submit as the foundation of a General Scheme for Extramural Sepulture:—

1. That, with a view to remedy the evils of intramural interment, as at present generally practised, it will be necessary to obtain separate Acts for London and the country.

2. That, after the passing of the Act for London, all interments in churches and within the precincts of the metropolis, except in special cases, under licence issued by the Metropolitan Interment Commission, should, as soon as the necessary preliminary arrangements are completed, be strictly forbidden.

3. That public burial-grounds be provided at a suitable distance from the metropolis; that, with a view to prevent the near approach of the population to such burial-grounds, no new dwelling-houses be permitted within a distance proportioned to the size of the cemetery and the number of interments for which it is calculated; and that, in order to render possible the advantages of extramural interment, without, at least, enhancing the cost to the poor, to secure the proper decencies of burial, and to put an end to the injurious influence to health occasioned by the careless and unchecked disposal of bodies, it be, with the exceptions above referred to, unlawful to inter in any other place than the public burial-grounds within the prescribed precincts.

4. That, considering the river as a highway passing through the largest extent of densely-peopled districts, the facilities for establishing houses of reception on its banks, the conveniences arising from the shorter distances within the larger portion of the same area for the removal of the bodies to such houses of reception, the advantages of steam-boat conveyance over that by railway in respect to tranquillity, and the avoidance of any large number of funerals at any one point at any one time, and of any interference with common traffic and with the throng of streets; and, lastly, taking into account its great comparative cheapness, it is desirable that the chief metropolitan cemetery should be in some eligible situation accessible by water-carriage.

5. That it be unlawful to inter in any burial-ground more than one corpse in one grave.

6. That the price of funerals be regulated according to a series of scales or classes; and that the whole expense of each funeral be

included in the charge fixed for its class, and be paid for in one sum.

7. That, it being essential to the success of the proposed improved practice of interment that it be administered on one system, under one responsible authority, all public burial-grounds and the whole arrangement for burial be intrusted by Commission to a small body, not exceeding five, of whom not less than one should be paid, specially qualified and responsible.

8. That in every cemetery there be a part consecrated and a part unconsecrated, and that in the consecrated part there be erected a church adapted to the purpose, and fitted also for full services according to the doctrine and discipline of the Church of England; and that in the unconsecrated part there be erected a commodious chapel.

9. That the new consecrated grounds be under the same ecclesiastical jurisdiction in matters spiritual, and in respect to the performance of the service and the superintendence of the chaplains, as the parochial burial-grounds for which they are to serve as substitutes now are; that the inhabitants retain the same right of sepulture as they would have had in their respective burial-grounds, subject to the general provisions which may be necessary for the public health and the convenience of sepulture; and that the incumbents have the right of performing the burial-service for any of their parishioners in the public cemetery, subject to the regulations established for the same.

10. That, inasmuch as the fees and voluntary offerings paid to the clergy constitute one of the least of the charges incident to interment, and at the same time form in some instances almost the whole, and in many instances the greater part, of the funds on which they have been accustomed to rely, provision be made for compensation to the benefice, on account of the receipt of fees for interments, on the average of three years before the passing of the Act.

11. That compensation be made to the proprietors of private burial-grounds and to the holders of cemeteries established by Act of Parliament according to the awards of juries.

12. That provision be made for placing the existing burial-grounds under such regulation as may be most conducive to the public health and advantage.

13. That although, if the whole work were to be done afresh for the first time, one part of a general scheme of extramural cemeteries would have included the formation of a corresponding set of intramural officers to receive orders, to give instructions, to collect and enforce payments, and to transact other general business, yet, to avoid the unnecessary creation of new offices, it be provided that the present parish clerks or sextons, or both, as the case may be, should be retained, and their offices made use of for maintaining the parochial connexion with the cemeteries.

14. That the whole immediate outlay for carrying into effect

this scheme may be obtained without any aid from the Treasury, and without the levying of any new rate, in the following way: that is to say, by loan; the principal and interest of such loan to be defrayed out of the receipts of the cemeteries, security being given by Act of Parliament for making good from the rates whatever deficiency may occur, should there be eventually any.

There is reason, however, to believe that, along with equitable arrangements as to compensations, and even with a considerable reduction on the existing charges for interment, there will be no deficiency to be defrayed by rates.

We have now to explain somewhat more in detail some parts of the scheme here proposed; to state the estimated expense of carrying it into effect; and to point out the uses that may be expected to be fulfilled by the adoption of it.

It appears to us to be essential that, as soon as provision shall have been made for interment in public burial-grounds, interment within the district included in the Act, in any other places whatever, should be strictly prohibited; excepting in special cases under the sanction and regulation of the Interment Commission, and excepting also in cases in which, at the discretion of families, the body is removed for burial beyond the district.

With these exceptions we regard the absolute prohibition of interment in any other than public burial-grounds as essential to the success of the scheme:—

1. Because it is indispensable to such success that control should be exercised over the whole of the interments, and this cannot be effected unless the whole are placed under the direction and management of one authority.

2. Because if interments are not restricted by law to the public burial-grounds, interments may still go on in the old burial-grounds, in which case the old evils will be continued; and in the present joint-stock companies' cemeteries, in which case the objections already urged against the principle of allowing the burial of the dead to be the subject of commercial speculation and trading profit, will apply in their full force.

If, however, the Legislature sanction the commercial principle as applied to this subject, and interments are still allowed to go on in cemeteries under the direction of trading companies, either such interments must be permitted without restriction, or they must be placed under regulation. If they are permitted without restriction, then the main evils of the existing practice of interment will be perpetuated without mitigation; for it has been shown, not only that these evils do exist in the metropolitan cemeteries, but that they must continue to exist in them, because the constitution of cemetery companies does not admit of their including sanitary objects as a necessary and fundamental part of their scheme.

If, on the other hand, the cemeteries of joint-stock companies

are placed under restriction, then it may be asked, to what practices in such cemeteries are regulations to apply? Is it, for example, to the practice of burial in common graves? It has been seen that interments take place in cemeteries in deep graves from 14 to 20 feet, containing from eight to twelve or even more coffins piled one upon another; and that the directors of the Kensal Green Company have proposed to enter on a system of interment in this way on a scale of unexampled magnitude. It appears that the cost of interment in a common grave is from 14*s.* to 20*s.*, while the cost of a single grave is about 5*l.*, the object of these common interments being economy of labour and space; and the practice, according to Mr. Whalley, affording one of those instances where commercial interests and sanitary and moral objects must inevitably be at variance. Suppose then a regulation to be made by the governing authority, prohibiting interments in common graves, and requiring that no grave shall be made beyond a certain moderate depth, or contain more than one coffin. Such a regulation would directly affect the profits of the trading company. Such a regulation, coupled with others for the suppression of further practices which it would be desirable to restrain, would be fatal to the undertaking, considered in a commercial point of view. From evidence already detailed, it is clear that the imposition of such regulations would limit the profits to a ruinous extent. The actual amount of profit divided, which in some instances does not exceed from 1½ to 2½ per cent., is proof of this. The question then arises, whether Parliament ought to continue to grant powers to companies to carry into effect an object presumed to be conducive to the public good, after experience has shown that that object cannot be accomplished in a proper manner without the inevitable ruin of the speculation, and when the want of adequate remuneration to enable the speculators to execute their undertaking in a mode beneficial to the public, operates as a temptation to induce them to perform it in an imperfect and injurious manner?

We submit that the whole tenor of the evidence that has been recited proves that this is the real position in which cemetery companies are now placed; that the experiment which the Legislature has afforded them the means of trying has failed; that the principle of applying the spirit of commercial enterprise to this object is vicious; that it is an object which can be properly effected only by a public authority devoted to the undertaking and responsible for its execution; and that neither the interests nor wishes of companies of this description, nor those of any private persons, ought to be permitted to endanger or obstruct the successful result of that undertaking in the hands of an appointed and responsible authority. We submit, further, that if companies which appear to have pursued their object with all the energy and prudence which commercial enterprise could communicate,

stimulated, as has undoubtedly been the case in some instances, by a disinterested and philanthropic purpose, have failed, it is not likely that other individuals or societies will obtain better success in the same pursuit.

3. Because, unless the whole of the interments are placed in the hands of one authority and are under one management, the expence of interment cannot be diminished. The estimates which have been made of the price at which it is practicable to give respectful interment to all ranks, but especially to the poorer classes, have been based on this assumption. If the governing authority have the certainty that the 52,000 interments which must be performed every year, will be performed by them, and can be performed only by them, the magnitude of the scale of the arrangements which they will be called upon to make, the extent of the contracts into which they will have to enter, and the employment of one and the same staff for the execution of the whole of the work—a staff which by constant training and practice will become more and more efficient, so that fewer numbers will be needed—the expense of the service will be reduced to its minimum; and thus the means will be obtained of reducing the present exorbitant charges for funerals to a moderate sum for all classes, but especially of giving to the very poorest of the people that decent and respectful burial for which they have always manifested so intense a desire, which they have made so many sacrifices to obtain hitherto, for the most part in vain, but which on this plan might be secured to them in a manner which would afford them the highest gratification, and which would at the same time be conducive to their moral improvement.

The means, however, of making the requisite large economies all turn on the strictness with which the principle is adhered to of placing the whole of the interments in the hands of one public authority. We have a deep sense of the importance of improving the practice of interment, but we should not feel justified in proposing to the Legislature even the most efficient plan for the accomplishment of that object, unless one of its certain results were the diminution of the cost of funerals to the poor; and we are satisfied that there is no other way by which such reduction can be secured, or by which extramural interment can be given to the poor without even increasing the heavy charges by which they are at present oppressed.

4. Because in all countries, as far at least as our inquiries have extended, wherever the practice of interment has been placed under legislative regulation, it has been found necessary that some administrative and responsible authority should be charged with the control and management of places of burial, as well as of burial itself.

"Practically speaking," says Dr. Sutherland, "the whole management of these cemeteries is vested in responsible parties; the proper regulation

of them is considered a highly important department of medical police, and is in no one instance left to irresponsible persons. Unity of system is obviously the end in view in all, but this end is approximated to differently in different countries.

"At Frankfort the responsible parties are the Commission, who hold their appointments from the Government.

"In Prussia the regulation of burial is placed under the authority of the magistrates.

"Throughout Saxony the magistrates are charged with and are responsible for the due execution and observance of the laws relating to burial.

"It is the same in South Germany; and in Paris the whole process of interment constitutes in itself a department of the Prefecture of Police of the Seine.

"The great advance which foreign countries have made over our own, in providing suitable places for the burial of their dead, appears to have proceeded partly from a greater amount of intelligence being spread abroad as to the sanitary evils resulting from intramural interments, and partly from a desire to cultivate a better state of feeling among the people. On making inquiry of various well-informed parties, it was stated to us that the changes which had been introduced into the arrangements were in perfect accordance with the popular feeling.

"The subject of interments, and the method of conducting them, has in every instance occupied public attention; but in this also progressive advances have from time to time been made, and the systems adopted in different states vary materially in point of efficiency and completeness.

"It must be admitted that our own country has been one of the latest in Europe to deal with the question."

We have reason, however, to believe, from the general tenor of the evidence which has recently been brought under our notice, that much earnest attention has lately been given to this subject by influential classes in England, as well as by the people generally of all ranks; and that the public mind is now prepared for and anticipates with satisfaction a general legislative measure, placing the whole practice of interment under proper regulation and control.

Dr. Milroy states, as the result of his observation and experience, that all classes of persons, parish authorities as well as others, with whom he has come in contact during his recent investigations, concur in opinion that the time is come when the Legislature should interpose to put an end to the present and to enforce an improved practice.

We have addressed queries to the clergy with a view to ascertain their opinion and experience on this among other questions. We have received numerous answers, though not from all to whom the queries were sent. The reply of those who have touched upon this point is uniformly to the following effect:—

The Rev. Thomas Burnett, D.D., St. James, Garlic-hythe, city of London.—"Cemeteries of sufficient capacity being made on all sides

of the metropolis, it certainly would be proper for the Government to interdict all interments in the common burial-grounds of the parishes lying within the circle of the dense population; and also to enact that in future no churchyards should be attached to any new district churches or chapels about to be erected within such circle or contiguous thereto, and that no vaults for burials be made under such churches or chapels. Respecting existing vaults and monumental graves in St. Paul's and Westminster Abbey, and certain other large churches, some special explanatory clause might be introduced in any interdictory Act on this subject, pointing out such and such exceptions."

Rev. W. S. Austin, All-Hallows, Lombard-street.—"There should be at least four cemeteries in open sites, and no burial should ever again be permitted in any city churchyard."

Rev. John Lyons, St. Mark's, Whitechapel.—"Burying-grounds within large cities and towns, with some very few exceptions, but too trivial to claim exemption, ought to be closed as public nuisances."

Rev. George Hargrave Parker, St. Andrew's, Bethnal-green.—"Whatever be the consequences, let interments in cities and towns be done away with."

Rev. Thomas B. Murray, St. Dunstan in the East, city of London.—"A general measure for extramural interment seems desirable. The place chosen out of the walls should be secure from future buildings near it, lest the object of seclusion be defeated. Churchyards are of comparatively modern date in England, about A.D. 760. Cemeteries without the walls are the more ancient custom, as among the Romans, according to the law of the Twelve Tables. Lord Stowell in one of his judgments, speaking of churchyards, says, 'They cannot be made commensurate to the demands of a large and increasing population; the period of decay and dissolution does not arise fast enough in the accustomed mode of depositing bodies in the earth to evacuate the ground for the use of succeeding claimants.'"

The Rev. Francis F. Strathern, St. Peter's, Walworth.—"I feel assured that, if a free trade in interments be established, scenes of a very revolting character will ensue."

Rev. Henry Robins, M.A.—"I would render it a *felony* to bury *in* any ground which should not have been registered as a burial-ground, and I would render such registry in every case an imperative and irrevocable act."

Though in the preceding argument we have urged the necessity of restricting interments to public burial-grounds, on the ground that the main objects of the Legislature cannot be carried into effect without such restriction, yet this enactment would accomplish other purposes, which, however subordinate with reference to the present question, ought not on that account to be overlooked.

Thus it would operate as an additional check in the prevention of crime, by increasing the difficulty of the disposal of the body in the case of murder, and in all other instances where concealment for illegal purposes may be desired. Were the interdiction of inter-

ment in any but a public or national burying-ground invariably consequent on the opening of a public one in any district, the discovery of a dead body anywhere within that district, excepting in consecrated or public ground, would be in itself positive proof of an unlawful act, and presumptive proof of a criminal act.

We may, in connection with this view, state that some regulation with respect to the interment of still-born children seems to be much needed. No legislative provision appears at any time to have been made for the registration of the births of still-born children, or for regulating the disposal of their bodies; yet it is estimated that there are annually in England at least 40,000 still-born children. In the sixth annual Report, the Registrar-General says,—

"At present I am well aware that many thousands of births annually escape registration. Increased exertions on the part of the registrars may effect much; but, in my opinion, *all* the births will not be registered until by law it be made compulsory on the father or mother, or some other qualified informant, to give notice, within a fixed period, to the registrar of a birth having occurred, under a small penalty, to be inflicted on default of giving such notice."

From the Report of Dr. George Robinson, of Newcastle, who has instituted inquiries into the general practice in such cases, it appears—

"That the practice adopted in the churchyards and cemeteries of Newcastle is similar to that which prevails throughout the rest of England. The parents of a still-born child, or a friend, or the midwife in attendance, communicate with the sexton of the churchyard or burial-ground, and arrange with him the time and charge for interment. The expense is in ordinary cases inconsiderable, not exceeding a shilling or eighteen pence, and is altogether a matter of private arrangement between the parents and the sexton. Among the poorer classes coffins are, in this part of the country, frequently dispensed with, and still-born children are carried to the grave in any convenient receptacle that may be at hand, or wrapped in an old garment. The midwife in attendance, or a friend of the mother, usually conveys the body to the burial-ground; and as neither clergymen, parish clerks, registrars, nor medical practitioners are required to take any part in the proceedings, the business is in general very quietly and speedily settled. From the preceding statement, it will be seen that the difficulties opposed to any correct return of the number of burials of still-born children are at present insurmountable, the sextons not having preserved any registers of this class of interments, and being also, in the great majority of cases, uneducated men."

The regulations adopted in other countries, one of the practical effects of which is, as we have seen, to restrict interments to the public burial-grounds, are generally combined with provisions which have, among other objects, this one in particular, namely,

the prevention of crime; such as the verification of the fact and the cause of death by some competent and responsible officer.

"There are laws throughout all the countries we visited," says Dr. Sutherland, "which prescribe that no interment shall take place till the fact and cause of death are duly attested by a qualified medical practitioner. The procedure followed differs in different cities.

"In Paris and Munich the verification must in every instance be made by public officers, who are generally medical men in practice, and who receive a fee for each verification. At Leipzig the duty is performed by the regular medical attendant of the family, if there be one; but if the decease has taken place without a medical man having been in attendance, the verification must be made by the public officer. At Berlin and Frankfort the certificate is filled up by the family attendant.

"Where there are regularly appointed verificators, the districts of the city are divided between them, and as soon as death takes place the fact must be communicated to the district verificator, who proceeds to the house and signs the certificate after making the necessary examination.

"The instructions under which these officers act are of a very stringent character, and the procedure is intended to obviate premature interment, and to detect crime.

"The French and German method of verification is intended to be *preventive*. A number of instances were mentioned to me in which crimes which would otherwise have escaped notice were detected by the keen and practised eye of the verificator, and the general opinion certainly was that much crime was prevented. In a written communication received from Dr. Radius, Professor of Pathology and Pharmacy in Leipzig, he says—'The examination of the dead has been very useful. . . . . I myself know two cases in which death by strangulation was discovered by the medical man.' I heard of no cases of that cold calculating destruction of successive members of the same family which has disclosed itself in England. Such a succession of murders, or the poisoning of children, or allowing them to die from neglect, in order to obtain the burial-money from a club in which they were insured, too frequently pass unnoticed; but under the system of verification they could hardly escape being brought under judicial inquiry, and crime might possibly be diminished by a knowledge of the certainty of its discovery."

Dr. Robinson refers to one exception to the usual practice in Newcastle. It appears that the present trustee of the Ballast-hill burial-ground, from a feeling of insecurity resulting from a continued observation of the practice of at once interring children as still-born on the mere verbal assertion of the bearer, has recently

"directed the clerk of the Ballast-hills burying-ground to require certificates in these cases from a medical practitioner or midwife, when either may have been in attendance."

There are proved evils and dangers connected with the present neglect of the registration of still-born children, and the want of

attention to the proper disposal of their bodies, to which we think it necessary on this occasion to call attention. The general conclusions to which Dr. Robinson has arrived are—

"1. That the present mode of conducting the interment of still-born children favours and facilitates the crime of infanticide, and the misdemeanour constituted by the concealment of birth.

"2. That it also facilitates frauds upon burial-clubs.

"3. That it tends to vitiate the registration returns for this kingdom, and renders them medically of less value.

"4. That it substitutes an uncertain and variable charge, levied at the discretion of the sexton, for a fixed and uniform scale of payment.

"For the future prevention of these evils, I would respectfully submit the propriety of enforcing the following or similar regulations;—

"1. That it be compulsory on the parent or parents of every child to register its birth within a specified period, under a small penalty, to be levied whether the child be born alive or not.

"2. That this provision be applied in every case where it shall appear that the child had survived the sixth month of fœtal existence, and had thereby attained a sufficient degree of development to render it capable of maintaining an independent vitality.

"3. That in any public cemeteries which may hereafter be provided, special regulations be made for the interment of still-born children on a fixed scale of charges; that a certificate of the fact of still-birth be required from any legally qualified medical practitioner who may have been in attendance; and that, where no such qualified person shall have been present at the birth, prompt notice be given by the parents or person acting for them to the registrar of the district or to a public medical officer, who shall then proceed to investigate the circumstances of the case and furnish the requisite certificate on being satisfied that the child was still-born."

If the whole plan for extramural sepulture for London were now to be devised for the first time, we should probably recommend the formation of two cemeteries only, placed in districts the most convenient of access at the western and eastern extremities of the metropolis. But there are several suburban cemeteries, on which large sums of money have been expended, and to which certain powers have been granted by Act of Parliament. Our opinion of the general condition and management of those cemeteries may be gathered from what has been already stated.

It appears that there are altogether eight cemeteries in the immediate neighbourhood of the metropolis, comprising at the present time about 282 acres of ground, of which about 17 acres have been used, exclusive of the space occupied by roads, plantations, and buildings. These cemeteries are—

				Acres.
Kensal-green, containing	of	ground	about	54
Norwood	,,	,,	,,	50
Highgate	,,	,,	,,	18
Nunhead	,,	,,	,,	50
Brompton	,,	,,	,,	39
Tower-hamlets	,,	,,	,,	30
Abney-park	,,	,,	,,	30
Victoria-park	,,	,,	,,	11

To Kensal-green, the first established, and upon the whole the best, it would appear to be easy to make any degree of extension that may be deemed desirable in one direction by the addition indefinitely of new portions of land. All the other cemeteries are more or less limited in their capacity, and there are very few of them which it would be desirable to extend, if their extension were practicable and easy.

Almost all of them are already, on some sides at least, closely approached by the habitations of the living; their outward boundary being in some instances, as in that of Norwood, separated from dwelling-houses scarcely more than by the width of an ordinary street. The only means by which it would appear to be practicable at the present time to interpose between these burial-grounds and the advancing population the desirable distance, is to confine interments to the centre of the ground, and to obtain from the outer portion the space that may be necessary; an expedient which must of course be attended with a great loss of ground.

We apprehend that the whole of these grounds must be purchased, and it is proposed that they should be taken upon jury compensation. The Kensal-green Cemetery at present divides 7 per cent. upon their outlay; two others, the Highgate and Nunhead, pay 2½ per cent.; and the Brompton pays only 1½ per cent. On account of the distance of these cemeteries from the great masses of the metropolitan population, no provision having been made for convenient removal to them, but the only mode of conveyance being by carriage processions, they have been placed entirely beyond the reach of the very poor; equally beyond the reach of the respectable class of artizans; much beyond the reach of the larger portion of the middle class; and their general use has consequently been confined to the more wealthy part of the community. Still with appropriate adaptations and provisions for easy access to them by economical means of removal, it appears that several of them might for some time to come be made available for the purpose of sepulture, and it is probable that from various circumstances they would be often selected for interment in special cases.

We are of opinion that, supposing the utmost available use were made of the existing cemeteries, the wants of the public would

require at least one additional principal metropolitan cemetery. After an exploration of the districts round London, a singularly eligible site for such a cemetery has been found, fulfilling, with reference to situation, distance, surface, soil, extent, and accessibility, the requisite conditions. It is situated at a sufficient distance from any town or village to fulfil the conditions of remoteness and seclusion. It forms part of an ancient domain, a considerable portion of which is abbey-land, and has been consecrated ground for many centuries. It rises by a gradual ascent from the river-bank to the height of 80 feet above high-water mark. The surface is moderately irregular, being here and there a good deal broken, but consisting, for the greater part, of gentle undulations and slopes. It comprises an ample extent of land, in a tract of gravelly and firm sandy soil over chalk. Immediately beneath the gravel is a bed of sand from 70 to 80 feet in depth, so firm that when cut with the spade it stands perpendicularly, requiring no shoring. In excavations in the neighbourhood there are blocks of this sand standing perpendicularly to the height of from 60 to 70 feet. Below the sand is the chalk, which is nearly on a level with low water, but water is not arrived at for the depth of from 270 to 300 feet. There are no streams or rivulets crossing the surface of the land in any direction, and no springs whatever.

These conditions secure the dryness of the ground, and are conducive to the natural process of decomposition. There is on the land much ornamental timber, a considerable portion of which is of appropriate character, but additional planting would be required, particularly of trees and shrubs that have naturally dark foliage, with great height in proportion to their width, admitting air and sunshine freely—vegetable forms which would give to the ground a distinctive character at once suggestive of its purpose and quite different from that of a pleasure-ground, and which are classically and popularly associated with places of sepulture. It has the advantage of river-side as well as railway conveyance, the distance of water-conveyance by steam-boat being from London Bridge one hour and a quarter, and by railway half an hour.

For the reasons set forth in the fourth general conclusion, a river-side cemetery appears to possess paramount advantages. The single superiority of railway-conveyance, that of speed, is counterbalanced by objections which seem to be insuperable: such as the difficulty of having special trains on any main trunk-line out of London on account of the nature and amount of the regular traffic; the inconvenience and incongruity of having funeral-assemblages at the same stations at which the ordinary traffic of the railway is carried on; and the necessity of having, for this special service, railway mourning-coaches and hearses, which could be used for no other purpose—thus requiring not only the exclusive use of the line at certain fixed times, but the provision

and the exclusive use of particular classes of carriages, &c. The further objection arising from the danger of collision, or of break down, need be suggested only, not argued.

On the other hand, with regard to the metropolis especially, a reference to the accompanying map will show that the highway of the river passes through the very centre of the largest extent of the most densely peopled districts; while the quietude, the more complete isolation, the facilities for uninterrupted transit at all hours, and the great economy of water-conveyance, give to this mode advantages with which no other can be compared.

The halfpenny-steamers, which at present ply on the river, indicate at how cheap a rate the service in question might be effected by this mode of conveyance. At the same time railway-conveyance may be convenient on some occasions, and may be often chosen by the attendants, who may join the funeral at the cemetery. There is, convenient for such cases, a railway-station near the spot which we have in view for the Great Eastern Metropolitan Cemetery.

If, however, we assume that the vast majority both of the corpses and attendants will be conveyed by water, then it will be necessary to provide, first, steam-boats specially adapted and exclusively appropriated to the object, and, secondly, reception-houses placed at convenient distances along the banks of the river. The adaptations necessary to give to the boats all the requisite conveniences deserve careful consideration, but may be safely left to the authority to which the execution of this service may be intrusted.

With reference to reception-houses the accompanying plan of the metropolis has been prepared to show the relative distances from the river Thames of certain proportions of the population.

The red lines parallel to the river represent half-mile distances from its banks, north and south. The red circles represent a distance of 2 miles' radius from the several existing metropolitan cemeteries which they surround.

Between Vauxhall-bridge and Limehouse, on the north side of the river, upwards of three-quarters of a million of inhabitants reside within a mile and a half of the river bank.

While this amount of population would be thus at an average distance of three-quarters of a mile from reception-houses established along the banks of the river, it will be seen on reference to the map that they would be an average of nearly 3 miles, or four times greater distance, from any of the present metropolitan cemeteries.

The chief portion of the dense population on the south side of the river is situated within one mile of its banks, and consists of upwards of one-third of a million. This amount of population, while it would thus be at an average of only half a mile from the

proposed reception-houses, would be at an average of 3 miles also from the nearest present cemetery.

For this mass of the population, it is calculated that the river conveyance would therefore be the most economical, and as under all other considerations it would be preferable, it may safely be inferred that whatever arrangements may be made with reference to the existing cemeteries or other extended provision, that the whole of the poorer class, and the great majority of the higher, would avail themselves of this accommodation.

Looking also at the position of large outlying areas, containing a great amount of population, and considering the advantages which would be afforded under combined management at the reception-houses, and the general Eastern Cemetery, it is considered that, irrespective of any local accommodation which may exist or may be provided, large additional numbers from these outside districts would voluntarily adopt also the river conveyance.

As the whole of the poorer classes of the districts above mentioned bordering on the Thames, forming upwards of three-fourths of the whole population of this part, may be assumed to take advantage of the river conveyance, it can scarcely be safe to reckon that less than two-thirds of the whole number of funerals of the metropolis would have to be accommodated in the eastern cemetery, and that reception-houses on the river banks must be provided for an annual mortality of 35,000, or 96 daily deaths.

It is submitted that there should be 5 reception-houses on the north side of the river, and 3 on the south side. The localities most convenient for them would appear to be the neighbourhood of the following places, viz.:—

On the Middlesex side.

1. Between Westminster and Waterloo Bridges, the most accessible spot from Charing-cross.
2. As near as practicable to Blackfriars Bridge.
3. Near to the Tower.
4. Near to the Thames Tunnel.
5. Blackwall.

On the Surrey side.

1. As near as practicable to Vauxhall Bridge.
2. Near to St. Saviour's Dock, Bermondsey.
3. Deptford.

A reception-house near Vauxhall Bridge on the Surrey side, and one near Blackfriars Bridge on the Middlesex side, would probably prove convenient for a certain portion of the district

on the opposite side also, and be the means of saving the expense of additional establishments.

Reception-houses at Blackwall and Deptford would, it is conceived, be of greater importance than is indicated by the mere amount of the population of those neighbourhoods; for, as a considerable length of the river transit through the Pool would be saved if embarked from these points, it is most likely that the inhabitants of many districts would avail themselves of them in preference, although situated somewhat nearer to other stations. For instance, Limehouse, Mile-End, and portions of Bethnal-Green, would probably prefer the Blackwall reception-house to the nearer one of Shadwell; and Peckham, Camberwell, and other extensive outlying districts in that neighbourhood, might rather proceed to Deptford than to the less remote station of Bermondsey.

For these various reasons it is difficult to estimate the extent of accommodation which each particular reception-house should contain; but the total and daily numbers in the following list exhibit an approximate calculation of what on the average may be probably expected. These numbers, however, form only a guide to the proportionate accommodation in each reception-house; the actual provision must be considerably greater, in order to meet the contingencies of epidemics, the variable seasons of sickness, and conveniences of time of burials.

In fixing the extent of accommodation of each reception-house, the rapid increase of the outlying districts and the stationary character of the older portions will have also to be considered.

ESTIMATE OF THE AVERAGE DAILY NUMBER OF CORPSES TO BE PROVIDED FOR AT EACH RECEPTION-HOUSE.

Reception-houses on Middlesex side.	Average daily number.
1. Between Westminster and Waterloo Bridges	16
2. Blackfriars	16
3. Tower	8
4. Thames Tunnel	8
5. Blackwall	14
On the Surrey side.	
1. Vauxhall Bridge	12
2. St. Saviour's Dock	8
3. Deptford	14
	96

But we have now to state that these houses of reception, which are necessary as affording convenient intermediate stations at which the corpses may be received, and from which at regular and

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pre-appointed times they may be conveyed to the boats, are intended to answer a further and much more important purpose.

From an inquiry made by the Statistical Society, under the direction of Lord Sandon, it appeared that on a house-to-house examination of the inner ward of St. George's, Hanover-square, in the immediate vicinity of some of the most opulent residences in the Metropolis, and this by no means the most densely peopled part of it, out of 1465 families, 929 had only a single room for the whole family; in which single room all the members of the family lived by day and slept at night. A similar result was obtained from a like house-to-house examination of the dwellings of the poorer classes resident in the borough of Marylebone.

Of the condition in which the surviving members of a family are placed who have only one living and sleeping room, when the calamity of death occurs, and of the deplorable consequences that often ensue, some conception may be formed from the following statements:—

"There are some houses in my district," says Mr. Leonard, the Medical Officer of the parish of St. Martin's-in-the-fields, "that have from 45 to 69 persons of all ages, under one roof; and in the event of death the body often occupies the only bed till they raise money to pay for a coffin, which is often several days. The body is retained in the room beside the living, from five to twelve days. In one instance the corpse had been retained twelve days; I could not remain in the room two minutes from the horrible stench. The coffin stood across the foot of the bed within eight inches of it; this was a small room not above ten feet by twelve feet square, a fire being always in it; it was, as in most cases of a like kind, the only room for sleeping, living, and cooking in. In another instance a mother and her infant were brought ill with fever to her father's room, which was ten feet square, with a small window of four panes; the infant soon died; then the grandmother was taken ill, and in a few days she also died; the corpse of the grandmother lay beside her husband in the same bed; in the next place the husband was seized with fever, attended with violent delirium, and died; and subsequently two of his children, one within a week, and the other within ten days, fell victims to the disease; in short, five out of the six inmates of this room died. Found in another similar room the corpse of a young person, who had died of fever; the father and mother were just taken ill of the same disease; the foot of the coffin was within ten inches of the father's head as he lay upon his pillow, himself in a fever; in a few days another child was seized with the same disease. Cites these cases merely as examples of the fatal consequences of the long retention of the body in these small and crowded rooms; they could be multiplied indefinitely; believes that the retention of the corpse in the room with the living is fraught with greater danger than even that produced by emanations from crowded graveyards, because when a body is retained in a small, heated, and ill-ventilated room, decomposition proceeds rapidly; the noxious gases evolved cannot escape; they accumulate and become highly concen-

trated; and they often prove rapidly and extensively fatal to the living inmates."

Other witnesses state that the death of parents, leaving the children orphans and destitute, is a frequent occurrence under those circumstances; and that they have sometimes seen whole families swept away.

"Nearly the whole of the labouring population in my district," says Mr. John Liddle, Medical Officer of the Whitechapel Union, "have only one room; the corpse is therefore necessarily kept in that one room, where the inmates sleep and have their meals; the corpse being sometimes stretched on the bed, the bed and bed-clothes being taken off, and the wife and family lying on the floor; at other times the corpse is stretched on a board which is placed on chairs: when children die, they are frequently laid out on a table. Other deaths often follow the first death in the same family, especially in an epidemic season."

Mr. Byles gives a similar description of the condition of the rooms of the labouring classes in Spitalfields, and states that he has known numerous instances of the extension of death through families, by the retention of the body of a child that had died of small-pox or other epidemic disease.

Mr. Bestow, relieving officer of the adjacent district of Bethnal-green, thus exemplifies the common consequences of the retention of the corpse in the living and working rooms of the family:—

"In the majority of cases the weavers live and work in the same room; the children generally sleep on a bed pushed under the loom; before a coffin is obtained the corpse is stretched on the bed where the adults have slept: serious evils result from the length of time during which bodies are kept under such circumstances; has known as many as eight deaths from typhus follow from the long retention of the body in the case of the first death, namely, five children and three visitors."

Mr. Wild, the undertaker, states

"Three-fourths of the rooms he has to visit are single rooms; the only room the poor people have to live in: generally speaking, finds only one bed in the room, and that occupied by the corpse: frequently there is no sacking to the bedding, when they borrow a board or a shutter from a neighbour, in order to lay out the corpse upon it; they have to borrow other articles necessary, as a sheet: in cases of rapid decomposition there is sometimes much liquid, and the coffin is tapped to let it out; has known them keep the corpse after the coffin has been tapped twice.—This liquid generates animal life very rapidly; and within six hours after a coffin has been tapped, if the liquid escapes, maggots, or a sort of animalcules, are seen crawling about. I have frequently seen them crawling about the floor of a room inhabited by the labouring classes, and about the tressels on which the tapped coffin is sustained. In such rooms the children are frequently left whilst the widow is out making arrangements connected with the funeral. And the widow herself lives there with the children. I frequently find them altogether in a small room with a large fire."

Mr. Jeffreys, an undertaker, residing in Whitechapel, gives a similar account of the dreadful effects of this long retention of the body:—

"I have known them to be kept three weeks: we every week see them kept until the bodies are nearly putrid: sometimes they have run away almost through the coffin, and the poor people, women and children, are living and sleeping in the same room at the same time. Then when the corpse is uncovered, or the coffin is open, females will hang over it. A widow who hung over the body of her husband, caught the disease of which he died. The doctor told her he knew she must have kissed or touched the body: she died, leaving seven orphans, of whom four are now in an orphan asylum. A young man died not long since, and his body rapidly decomposed. His sister, a fine healthy girl, hung over the corpse and kissed it; in three weeks after, she died also."

Mr. Hogg, sexton of St. Mary's, Paddington, in evidence recently taken by Dr. Milroy, states—

"That among the poorer classes, the corpses are often kept far too long before burial. If a person dies on Thursday or Friday, the body is seldom buried before the second Sunday following. He has been repeatedly obliged to forbid the coffin being taken into the church—to the great offence and grief of the mourners—in consequence of the horrible effluvia often perceptible many yards off. He has on such occasions seen the sleeves of the bearers quite dripping with the sanies that leaked from the coffin. How the men can stand the disgusting employment, walking as they often have to do for a mile or more under a pall all the while, and this too generally in warm weather (for the occurrence is most frequent then), is indeed surprising. No wonder that they usually drink to excess after such work."

Mr. Upton, sexton of Bunhill-fields burial-ground, in the City-road, confirms the statement of Mr. Hogg, as to the horrible state in which coffins are sometimes brought for burial in consequence of the long retention in the houses of the poor:—

"He has repeatedly seen the putrid discharge from the coffin dripping down along the clothes of the undertaker's men who carried it, so that the whole line of the funeral procession from the gate to the grave might be traced by the drippings on the ground! This is a monstrous evil that cannot be too quickly put a stop to."

Most of these witnesses concur in stating that the expense of the funeral is one of the chief causes that leads to this long retention of the corpse; that this retention is pregnant with danger, not only to the surviving members of the family, but to the residents of adjoining rooms, and even neighbouring houses; that owing to the close and crowded state of the rooms, and the large fires that are kept in them, decomposition often proceeds with excessive rapidity, and that the gases of decomposition, together with the putrescent animal matters which they hold in suspension, act upon the survivors with unusual intensity at the very time when,

from the exhaustion of watching and nursing, and the depression of grief and anxiety, they are the least able to resist the poison.

The following evidence affords melancholy proof of the extent to which these evils are aggravated during the prevalence of an epidemic;—

"Every one conversant with the dwellings and habits of the poorer classes in England," says Dr. Sutherland, "must be aware that overcrowding exists to a great extent in all our large towns, and they must frequently have observed the strange intermixture of the dead with the living which this circumstance at present necessitates. During epidemics, as for example the recent outbreak of cholera, the necessity for some place for receiving the dead previous to interment must have pressed itself on every one who was really conversant with the state of the poor during that terrible visitation.

"I have received a great deal of evidence on this subject from medical men in all parts of England and Scotland, a few specimens of which I subjoin. The retention of the dead in rooms occupied as living or sleeping rooms is necessarily almost universal among the poor. During the late epidemic, however, it very frequently happened that two or more corpses were laid out in the room at the same time. I once saw three adult corpses in one room, and a person ill with cholera in the only other room in the house. On another occasion, on a hot summer's day, I saw two corpses in a small apartment in which there were three persons sitting. There was a fire at the same time in the room. Dr. Duncan, of Liverpool, states that he has met with 15 instances of two corpses in the house at the same time. Mr. Trahan, one of the Union officers at Liverpool, mentions 24 such instances. Mr. Cooper, medical officer to Wolverhampton Union, says that he has had 18 or 19 such cases; and similar information has been derived from many localities. Corpses of persons who have died from typhus, scarlet fever, and other epidemics, are also retained for a period beyond what is safe (if, indeed, any retention be safe in such cases). The practice in many districts appears to be to keep such corpses three, four, or five days. Mr. Pearse and Dr. Tripe, of Plymouth, state that they 'have seen much evil and delay in cases of death from typhus and epidemics,' from the undue retention of the corpse. Mr. Kimpton, surgeon, says, 'I have known corpses of persons who died of typhus and scarlatina kept several days in rooms with the living, and believe in some instances it was the cause of disease extending to other persons in the house.' Dr. Duncan, of Dundee, writes that interments of persons who have died of epidemic disease are 'in general delayed too long amongst the poorer classes.' Dr. Roe, of Plymouth, says, 'I have seen the coffin lying on the bedstead in one part of the room, the food cooking in another, and the dressmaker making mourning in a third. . . . . I have never known an interment hurried in the slightest degree because the person died of typhus or other epidemic; not even when there was only one room for the living and the dead.' Mr. White, surgeon, Dowlais, writes, 'It is a very common event to see a large party of relatives sitting around a table partaking of food and a corpse lying in one corner of the room.'"

From evidence already presented to Parliament it appears that

of the deaths that take place in the metropolis upwards of one-half are of the labouring classes, and that of these four out of five occur in families that have only one living and sleeping room; that is to say, in upwards of 20,000 instances the corpse must be kept, during the interval between the death and the interment, in the same room in which the surviving members of the family live and sleep; while of the 8000 deaths that occur in the metropolis every year from epidemic diseases, by far the greater part take place among this class of the population, and under the circumstances just described.

But the scene of dreadful suffering and danger represented in the instance of every individual family in which the calamity of death occurs under such conditions, is not restricted to that of physical wretchedness; the moral consequences are no less deplorable. A clergyman, who appears to have obtained his experience from the exemplary performance of arduous duties in a very poor and crowded parish, states to the following effect:—

"With the upper classes a corpse excites feelings of awe and respect; with the lower classes it is often treated with as little ceremony as the carcass in a butcher's shop. The body is never absent from the sight; eating, drinking, sleeping, it is still by their side; mixed up with all the ordinary daily functions of life, till it becomes as familiar to them as when it lived and moved in the family circle. From familiarity it is a short step to desecration. The body, stretched out upon two chairs, is pulled about by the children, made to serve as a resting-place for any article that is in the way, and not seldom it is the hiding-place for the beer-bottle or the gin, if any visitor should arrive inopportunely. When respect for the dead, that is, for the human form in its most awful stage, is gone, the whole range of social sympathies must be weakened—perhaps blighted and destroyed. They have gazed upon death so perpetually, they have grown so intimate with its terrors, that they no longer dread it, even when it attacks themselves; and the heart which vice has deadened to every appeal of religion is at last rendered callous to the natural instinct of fear."

The connexion between the extinction of the feeling of respect for the dead and the growth of that callousness which renders the brutalized mind insensible to the sacredness of life, and which thus prepares it for the perpetration of crimes of violence of the greatest enormity, has been often traced by those who have had the best opportunity of witnessing the process, and they concur in stating that it is in these filthy, unwholesome, and crowded rooms, where none of the observances of decency are regarded, and where the living, without emotion or concern, eat and drink and sleep in the presence of the dead, not only that the degraded and profligate who constitute the ordinary pests of society are trained, but also that it is out of those same abodes that our great criminals generally come, brutal and reckless men, who every now and then perpetrate in cold blood, with a savage callousness, deeds which fill the whole country with disgust and horror.

We submit that these dreadful results, as far at least as they depend on the retention of the dead among the living, admit of prevention and remedy. There can be no difficulty in providing suitable places for the proper reception and care of the corpse in the cases in which death occurs in the single living and sleeping rooms of the living; and it appears to us that the houses of reception, which, for the convenience of removal, must form part of the proposed plan for extramural interment, might be appropriately and conveniently adapted to this purpose. We have received plans and estimates, which show that edifices fitted for this object might be erected and kept in order at very moderate cost. The experience of other countries proves that there is no insuperable difficulty in obviating the association of repulsive or painful feelings with houses devoted to this purpose. Usages, indeed, implying the very opposite associations, have grown up in some places on the Continent, which are not likely to be imitated by the people of this country, with whose more quiet and retired habits they are incompatible. We can perceive no useful purpose to be answered by the decoration of the dead body, or by the exhibition of the corpse as a public spectacle—a custom which is pretty general at Munich, for instance, and which has occasionally been in use up to recent times even in our own country, as on certain state occasions. But the result of the inquiries connected with the whole practice of interment abroad is, that in all the countries visited there is a feeling of reverential respect and tenderness for the dead, which, in our opinion, it is of the very highest importance to cherish; and we feel assured that such a sentiment for the dead would be the very last that would interfere with any temporary disposition of the body, provided respectful charge were taken of it, which might be required for the safety of the living.

The desire to retain the remains of a beloved relative as near and as long as possible is natural, and is as strong in the bosom of the poor man as in that of the more educated and refined; but there are circumstances affecting both rich and poor strong enough to overcome this feeling, and which ought to overcome it. When the dwelling-house is small and ill-ventilated, and situated in a close and crowded neighbourhood; when the inmates of such a dwelling are numerous, and particularly when the death has occurred from an epidemic or contagious disease, but above all when the whole of a family occupy only a single room in such a house, it is absolutely indispensable to the safety of survivors that the corpse should be at once removed from such a dwelling-place; and we are warranted by evidence immediately to be stated, to say that there are few who would object to the removal of the body under such circumstances, if it could be taken to a place fit for its reception, and confided to the care of those who would take respectful charge of it.

Considering the large proportion of the working classes that

live in single rooms, and the high rate of mortality to which they are subject, it has appeared to be necessary to calculate upon an extensive provision of houses of reception for their use. It may, however, be proper to observe that the principal mortality is amongst children, and that if the desire of the poor mother to retain her child near her to the very last would often be insuperable, the danger from the retention of a child (though under some circumstances that would be imminent) would in general be less than from that of the adult; neither need the corpse of a child occupy perhaps the only bed of the family; nor be always in view of the inmates; nor in frequent direct contact with them: so that where the desire for the retention of the body would be the strongest, the evil arising from such retention would under ordinary circumstances be the least.

We are satisfied, however, from the general tenor of the evidence we have received, that when the poor perceive the superior care that would be taken of the body to that which can be given to it in their own abodes, and learn that they may have free access to the corpse while it remains in the house of reception, any prejudice which they may at first have against its removal there would disappear.

The following recital of facts places in a striking point of view the want which is generally experienced of such receptacles for the temporary care of the corpse, and the groundlessness of the expectation that if provided they would not be used:—

"It is in vain to look for any alteration," says Dr. Sutherland, "until proper accommodation for the dead be provided." This difficulty must be obvious, and it has struck many careful observers. Mr. Stott, surgeon, Manchester, says, 'I know no instance in which the removal of a corpse from a dwelling-house preparatory to interment took place; *no place that I am aware of having been provided for such purpose.* The withdrawal of the living from the dead would be *most difficult* in the majority of instances. A receptacle for the dead appears a desideratum, and I think would be well received by the people themselves.' Mr. West, surgeon, Hull, writes, 'I have known the corpses of persons who have died of typhus, scarlatina, measles, and small-pox retained in the dwellings of the poor for a much longer period than I considered safe;' and he adds, 'there should be immediately provided some places or convenient localities where the poor might deposit their dead under proper regulations, having due regard to their feelings; and although objections would be raised at first, they would soon give way to the urgent persuasion of the persons who would be placed in charge of such depositories.'

"Mr. Pearse and Dr. Tripe also point out the importance of providing reception-houses. They say—'We would beg respectfully to suggest the propriety, during the prevalence of malignant diseases, of buildings being provided for the immediate reception of the dead, especially for the working classes, who, in large towns, are generally compelled to live in single, confined, badly-ventilated and badly-lighted apartments.' Other medical practitioners make similar suggestions. Even the poor themselves have felt the evils of being compelled to retain their dead, and

have been obliged to resort to precipitate interment. A number of such instances are given by the parochial medical officers in all parts of the country. They chiefly take place in cases where death has occurred in the lower class of lodging-houses, in order that 'the room may be occupied again.' In some cases no medical aid appears to have been sent for. Mr. Cripps, surgeon, Liverpool says—'I have often been called up during the night in order to give a certificate of death, for the purpose of having the corpse interred the first thing in the morning, the person having only died in the early part of the night.' Dr. Duncan, of Liverpool, bears important testimony to the desire for getting rid of the dead in some cases. He says, 'During the recent epidemic, from 30 to 40 applications were made to me to procure the removal of bodies, retained for a period longer than I judged safe.'

"This obvious necessity led to the actual opening of a reception-house at Leeds during the late outbreak of cholera. Mr. Radcliffe, surgeon to the Union, states that on the first appearance of cholera in Leeds the Board of Guardians, at his request, erected such a house in connexion with one of the cholera hospitals; 'and to this place,' he says, 'I caused to be conveyed many bodies from *single* and other rooms previous to interment—indeed, almost immediately after death; and when the poor found that the dead were treated with decency and respect, I found no opposition to their being sent there.'

"Here, then, was a very natural solution, and, at the same time, a successful one, for a great difficulty arising from the overcrowded state of our cities and towns. Perhaps no clearer proof of the existence of the evil could be given, and no more satisfactory method of getting rid of it indicated, than the preceding evidence affords."

But the want of houses of reception is not confined to the very poor. To shopkeepers (who often occupy only the basement story of the house for the purposes of business, and let off the upper rooms to lodgers), lodging-house keepers, innkeepers, the owners of small houses who let single rooms to families, or single rooms to single persons (the latter being perhaps strangers in London), the necessity for the immediate removal of the dead is often so urgent that they are compelled to resort to some expedient, however unsatisfactory. The usual practice under such circumstances is for the undertaker who conducts the funeral to receive the body, who either keeps it on his own premises, often in a shed, or on the premises of his workmen.

The provision of houses of reception would therefore be only an extension and a better ordering of a practice already in existence, and which, from the necessities of large classes of the community, must constantly go on, whether means are taken to supply the accommodation needed in a proper manner or not.

"The house in which my foreman lives," says Mr. Hewitt, an undertaker, "is seldom unoccupied by a corpse. During the last week there were three at one time. The poor people speak of the inconvenience of having the corpse in their house, where they have only one room for their family. It is customary for me to say, 'Very well, then, you may be accommodated; the body may be brought to our house,

and kept until the time of the funeral, when you and your friends may come to the house and put on your fittings, and follow the body to the ground.' This is done: men and women come to the house, put on hoods, scarves, coats, and hatbands, and follow the body to the ground. The body is sometimes removed under these circumstances from the room of the private house where the death has taken place. I believe that all the undertakers receive deceased persons in their houses and keep them for burial. Judging from the particular circumstances coming within my own experience, I believe that if arrangements of a superior order were made for the reception and proper care of bodies previous to interment, it would be regarded as a boon to a great many classes, especially the poorest, and those who have only one room, in which all the family have to live. It would be a great accommodation also to many persons of the middle classes—shopkeepers, who only keep the under part of their houses, and let off the upper parts. On the occurrence of a death these classes are as much inconvenienced by the presence of a corpse as are persons of the labouring classes. And yet there are few who like to have a burial take place in less time than a week. To such persons as these it would certainly be a very great accommodation to have an intermediate house of reception for the due care of the body until the proper time of interment."

Mr. Thomas Tagg, jun., an undertaker of extensive business in the city of London, states, that—

"Besides the poorest classes who die at hospitals and are buried by their friends, and are sometimes taken to the undertaker's premises, when more convenient to the relatives of the deceased than to be removed to their own houses, respectable persons also, from the country, who die at an hotel or inn, or in apartments, are occasionally removed to the undertaker's until the coffins are made, and then they can be conveyed to the residence of their family, or their vaults in the country."

Mr. Wild gives other examples of the practice; and states that instances sometimes occur of persons of respectable condition in life who cannot bear the painful impressions produced by the long-continued presence of the corpse in the house, and who quit it and return to attend the funeral.

Mr. Sadler states that he is constantly applied to to receive the bodies of persons who die in hospitals and hotels; that he has the bodies removed to a room on his premises, and that in his opinion a house of reception would be a great relief.

Mr. Bedford is asked,—

"Are you not applied to in cases of deaths occurring at hotels, or persons coming up to London, or living in chambers, or being in hospitals, to remove the body to some place until interment?—*A.* From hospitals especially, because they are obliged to be removed immediately. I hire a room or remove them to the room of one of my men, if there are no friends in town who can procure a room to keep them in. I

had recently an instance in a lodging-house in Lower Brook-street, whence the body was removed quickly, to avoid the observation of the neighbours."

Mr. Shillibeer is asked,—

"Have you had any experience of the plan for intermediate places of reception?—*A*, Yes, it is as requisite for other classes sometimes as for the labouring classes. For example, if a gentleman or a tradesman has a relation die in an hospital, they send for me to measure the body, and to send for the corpse and take it away immediately. The same is also the case with deaths occurring at a mad-house, and I often have to take the bodies to my house, where I have a place fitted up for the purpose; I am scarcely ever without a dead body in it. The charge is 1*l*. Sometimes I keep them a week, sometimes a month, and the funerals then take place from my shop. That is done by tradesmen, because shutting up their shops is a great inconvenience, from impeding business.

Q. "You say also from mad-houses?—*A*. Yes, because of the regulation which exists that the bodies shall be taken away immediately. Where persons die in hospitals, or where the family are all living in one room, the immediate removal may be effected; but there is, otherwise, a feeling in the English character that they like to keep the remains as long as possible.

Q. "But where a single man dies in lodgings, or in an hospital?—*A*. Yes, or where an officer dies on board his ship. I fetched away a body lately under those circumstances.

Q. "From all these cases do you concur in the opinion that well-provided houses of reception, to which a body may be removed, would be an important relief, especially to the working classes?—*A*, So satisfied am I of it, that during the raging of the cholera I wrote to Mr. Simon, offering a portion of my premises to be appropriated to such a purpose. I was prepared to fence off a portion of those premises, and to have them divided into parish divisions. I offered that to the City authorities at that time.

Q. "You have probably read the account of the Frankfort house of reception. From all you know of the feelings of the labouring classes, have you any doubt that some such plan here would be not only important, but also gratifying to them?—*A*. I have no doubt it would be both important and gratifying, especially to the labouring classes.

Q. "And you think that the relatives would be gratified if the body were respectfully removed?—*A*. I have no doubt of it; and it would also be important as regards health. I was so impressed by this account of the reception establishment at Frankfort, that I was very much inclined to go to inspect and examine it.

Q. "Have not the principal undertakers places for receiving bodies when required?—*A*. All take them in; but they have not places for the purpose. They put them in a shed, or anywhere for the time.

Q. "Then, it is a part of their business to find some place for such a purpose, but not such a place as persons would like their friends to lie in, even for a short period?—*A*. They generally do not know where the bodies are put.

Q. "But if full and proper accommodation were made, and all respectful attention were paid to the bodies, and it was ascertained that no one could be interred until the signs of death had appeared, the numbers so received at such places would be greatly increased?—*A.* No doubt of it.

Q. "Do you think that if the arrangements were known to be managed well, persons living in single rooms would have any objection to have a body removed from such rooms at once?—*A.* They would be delighted with it.

Q. "If the body were to be removed to a house suited for it?—*A.* Yes, certainly."

In carrying into effect a general system of extramural interment for the metropolis, it is obvious that a staff of persons of superior information and intelligence will be required to make arrangements for funerals; to superintend the removal of the bodies; to visit the houses of the poor when death occurs in single living and sleeping rooms; to give the necessary instructions to the survivors for their own safety; to obviate as far as may be practicable the danger to be apprehended from the presence of the corpse until it can be removed; to examine into the existence of any local causes calculated to promote the extension of disease, more especially if the death has arisen from any form of epidemic, endemic, or contagious disease, and to take without delay what measures may be necessary for the removal or mitigation of such cases, as far as may be possible. Of the value of the services which might be rendered both to the bereaved family and to neighbouring families by a medical man, a public officer, charged with the execution of such duties, and the full appreciation of that service on the part of those for whom it may be provided, the strongest conviction is entertained by those who are best acquainted with the wants and feelings of the poor.

"They come to me in tears," says Mr. Wild, "and beg for accommodation. On observing to them, 'You seem very ill,' a common reply is, 'Yes, I feel very ill; I am very much harassed, and I have no one to assist me.' I never see or hear of any person of education or influence visiting them to give them advice and aid, unless they happen to be connected with some local association. A public officer, as the officer of the Board of Health, would have great influence with them. The doctor now has the greatest influence, but he does not attend them after the death."

John Downing, the secretary of a burial society, himself a mechanic, says,—

"I have never met any gentleman or professional person attending to give advice to the widow. They generally act on the advice of the poor people in the neighbourhood, or of any friends or relatives that may chance to call on them. I never knew either medical man or minister attend professionally to give advice or consolation. I am very confident that a medical officer, or officer of Health, attending gratuitously to inspect the body and register the cause of death, and to give

advice as to the proper means of conducting the funeral, would have a very hearty welcome. I think a deal of benefit would be derived from it to the feelings as well as to the health of the parties."

Mr. Hewitt says,—

"I think an officer appointed from the first class of physicians, an officer of Health, would be better received than a local medical man; such an officer would be received by all most respectfully; such an officer is calculated to do more good than can be conceived."

Mr. Bedford concurs in this opinion; and Mr. Shillibeer says:—

"Having a gentleman of education on the spot, who would point out to the relatives what ought to be done, and who would take much of the trouble out of their hands, would delight them."

The chief duties of such an officer, besides those which have been already stated, would be to make himself aquainted with the sanitary condition of the individual family in which the death has occurred; to give advice and assistance with reference to the funeral and other matters which the occasion may require; to direct the removal of the corpse from single rooms occupied as living and sleeping rooms, by one family or more; to see that this removal is effected in a respectful manner, with all due attention to the wishes and feelings of the friends; to verify the cause as well as the fact of the death, where there has been no medical attendant; to ascertain the cause of death from the medical attendant, where there has been one; to grant, when required, a certificate of the fact of death, whenever apprehension is entertained of premature interment; to see that due care is taken of the bodies in the houses of reception; to make arrangements with the friends of the deceased, and with the officers of the cemeteries, as to the time and the mode of the removal of the dead, for the preservation of regularity, quiet, and order; and to superintend and carry into effect the regulations of the authority charged with the execution of this branch of the public service. It is estimated that for the performance of these duties, one chief officer of Health, with eleven assistants, would suffice for the whole of the Metropolis.

Until actual trial, however, has been made of the houses of reception, and of the extent to which the services of the officers of Health may be demanded, it cannot be determined what number of either may be needed, or what modification of the duties which have been indicated may be required.

Though specially provided for the service of the poor, the officers of Health will be expected to render their assistance to persons of all classes and ranks who may seek it, giving them the information of which they may be in need, in relation to all matters connected with funerals, and the precautions necessary for

the safety of the survivors, and affording them the advantage of their knowledge and experience in reference to details. All this service on the part of the officers of Health would of course be rendered only when sought. It is because we deem it desirable that the change in the entire system of interment which we propose should be carried into effect voluntarily, that we consider it to be of primary importance that a person of the condition of an officer of Health should be brought early into contact with survivors, to give them instruction as to the mode in which they may best proceed for the accomplishment of their wishes.

It is because we consider that any wishes in themselves harmless or inoffensive, as well as those which are universally felt to be proper, should be complied with, that we propose the arrangement which will secure to the representatives of the deceased disinterested information as to the mode in which their wishes may be accomplished, or point out what real obstacles are opposed to them, and why they would fail in the attempt to execute them.

Viewing the extensive failure in the execution of the expressed wishes of deceased persons, as well as of their representatives, in relation to interment, we cannot but believe that the changes which we propose will afford better securities than have hitherto existed for carrying them into effect.

One frequent last injunction is, that the funeral shall be plain and inexpensive. In this last point at least, the wish is almost always frustrated; but we hope to give ample security for its being fully attained in a manner compatible with the utmost decency and solemnity.

Another wish sometimes expressed is, that the interment should not be hurried; a wish occasionally arising from irrepressible apprehension of premature interment. Though in the state of modern science there is little danger that apparent death can be mistaken for real death; though the experience of the Continent, where for the last thirty years special and most careful provision has been made for guarding against so fearful a mistake, and where, notwithstanding every precaution, there has yet occurred not a single case of resuscitation after apparent death; though this experience places in the strongest light the fact that this apprehension is for the most part groundless, still where it does exist it is desirable that it should be removed; and there can be no better security against this painful fear, than the verification, whenever required, of the fact of death on the part of a responsible officer of Health.

The common wish of survivors with reference to the interment of their relatives and friends is, that the funeral should be in harmony with their own feelings, respectful and impressive. The common failure of funerals in these respects, notwithstanding the

excessive expense bestowed on them, is in part ascribable to the inferior order of tradesmen, whose competency is presumed, but who have none of the qualifications fitting them for the performance of such a service.

Without expecting too much, it is to be hoped that it is practicable by proper administrative arrangements to obtain and secure a higher order of consideration and care in this matter, at all points, and most certainly in the celebration of religious rites.

We are now to consider the comparative expense at which it is possible to carry into effect the proposed scheme of sepulture.

In the Westminster, Marylebone, Finsbury, the Tower Hamlets, and the City of London districts of the metropolis, there are upwards of 200 burial clubs, composed chiefly of the labouring classes, comprising from 100 to 200 members each, and possessing aggregate amounts of deposits of from 90*l.* to 1000*l.* each, raised in contributions of from 1½*d.* to 2*d.* per week. These clubs pay as funeral expenses on the death of a member from 5*l.* to 10*l.*

From extensive inquiries it appears that 5*l.* may be taken as a low average rate of expense for the funeral of a working man.

The present actual total charges to families for the funerals of adults, as ascertained from an examination of undertakers' bills, compared with what may be accomplished on the intended plan, is as follows:—

The cost to the gentry for each funeral of an adult is 100*l.*, the estimated cost under the proposed system of interments is 38*l.* 10*s.*, being a saving of nearly two-thirds. First-class tradesmen under the present system 50*l.*, under the proposed system 16*l.* 10*s.*, being a saving of more than two-thirds. Second-class tradesmen under the present system 29*l.* 10*s.*, under the proposed system 9*l.* 9*s.*, being a saving of more than two-thirds. Artizans under the present system 5*l.*, under the improved system 2*l.* 10*s.*, being a saving of one-half. The total annual saving upon the whole of the interments of the metropolis may be estimated in round numbers at 350,000*l.*

We regard it as an essential principle of the proposed system that the expenses of each interment shall be comprised in one sum, fixed upon according to a series of pre-appointed and graduated scales. The determination and regulation of the charges under each scale will of course devolve on the authority appointed to carry this service into effect.

The immediate outlay required for carrying the scheme into effect will be:—

For the construction of one large eastern water-side cemetery, reception-houses, &c.	£250,000
For the extension of the Kensal-Green Cemetery to constitute one large western cemetery	50,000
For the purchase of the whole of the existing metropolitan cemeteries and other burial-grounds . .	400,000
	£700,000

This sum, borrowed on the security of the dues, say at 5 per cent. interest, would be an annual charge of .	£35,000
The estimated establishment charges on cemeteries, inclusive of the clergy, funeral rites, and officers of Health, and compensation for loss of fees, would be about	77,000
Total annual amount of expense of cemeteries . .	£112,000

We could only found confident conclusions upon actual surveys, plans, and estimates, carefully prepared by competent officers. We have not deemed it requisite to set forth all the details of the data so prepared and in our possession, as it would greatly augment the bulk of the Report and delay its presentation for consideration. It appears to be proper, however, that we should express our confidence in these data, and in the competency of the inspectors and professional gentlemen by whom they have been prepared; and we hope that within a few months after receiving the authority of Parliament, the whole of the intramural interments may be discontinued, and a system of extramural sepulture substituted, and that, if the principles herein developed be properly adhered to, within a reasonable time the whole practice will be elevated, not only beyond the least objectionable practice in this country, but beyond the best practice which they have found and examined on the Continent.

We have, in conclusion, to call attention to some of the uses which may be expected to be fulfilled by the adoption of this plan of sepulture.

1. It will put an end to intramural interment with all its attendant evils.

2. It will obviate any injurious effects on the public health from the practice of extramural interment.

If its principles are acted on, in any use that may be made of existing cemeteries care will be taken to interpose between the

spots where interments take place and neighbouring houses a sufficient space for the safety of the inhabitants; while the site contemplated for a national cemetery is so remote from the metropolis as to render it highly improbable that it can ever be approached by a suburban population.

It has been shown that when great numbers of dead bodies are placed in the ground, it is not possible to prevent the gases and other noxious matters of decomposition from penetrating laterally through the earth, and making their way in an upward direction to the surface. When however the soil is loose, porous, and gravelly; when the depth of the graves is properly regulated; when there is an abundant and healthy vegetation on the ground, and when there is an open expanse of country around it, decomposition appears to go on under conditions in which the proportion of its products that can reach the surface is reduced to the minimum; while it is certain that under such conditions those which do reach the surface must, by the law of the diffusion of gases, be instantly dispersed in the bulk of the surrounding air; and it is probable that by that dispersion they become so diluted as to be rendered innoxious.

We have enumerated, among the conditions which tend to regulate the evolution of the products of decomposition, the action of an abundant and healthy vegetation.

From the concurrent testimony of gravediggers, sextons, and others employed in churchyards, it appears that decomposition invariably goes on more rapidly near the roots of trees than in any other parts of the burial-ground; that the earth is always much drier near the roots of trees than elsewhere; that the fibres of the roots are drawn towards the site of the grave, and are often observed to penetrate right through the decayed wood of the coffin lid. It is probable, therefore, that these roots are actively and unceasingly at work absorbing the products of decomposition as they are evolved, and thus preventing their escape to the surface, and consequently their pernicious effects.

In this manner, by arresting these noxious matters in their course, the plant, instead of allowing them to go forth on an errand of destruction, retains them at the moment when they are about to be resolved into their physical elements, within the sphere of life, to recommence a new cycle of organic, healthful, and useful existence.

It is reported by Dr. Sutherland, that he found the great utility of vegetation in shortening the period of decay fully recognised abroad; and that it was stated to him at Paris, as a reason for burying only one body in a grave, that the quantity of vegetation which could be placed on the grave could dispose most readily of the gaseous matters of one body and shorten the period of interment by eating out the nutritious matter of the soil; but this was not the case where more than one body had been buried,

and that the quantity of organic matter was found to be much larger when the ground was reopened in such cases.

The action of vegetation in arresting the products of decomposition, and preventing them from reaching the surface, by recombining them into living and healthful vegetable structures, would afford a simple and effectual means of putting an end to any further injury to the public health from the existing burial-grounds, if, after they have been finally closed, they were, wherever practicable, planted with trees, and still preserved as sacred spots.

Reference has sometimes been made to plans for the burning of the bodies of the dead, and for their rapid destruction by the direct action of chemical agents. The destruction of the body by corrosive substances, though proper and necessary under peculiar circumstances, is too revolting to be likely to come into general use. With respect to the plan of incremation, it is probable that the atmosphere would be more injured by the burning of 150 bodies every day than it would by the gradual progress of decomposition under a properly regulated system of burial.

By proper regulations as to the number of interments and the depth of the graves in suitable situations and soils, and by the aid of an abundant and healthy vegetation (which, however, it is impossible to obtain in crowded cities), the noxious matters evolved from natural decomposition in the earth may probably be so diluted and dispersed as to remove almost entirely, if not entirely, any injurious influence from this source.

Since, therefore, it is practicable to remove all physical objections to burial,—since its expense may be so reduced as to obviate all ground of objection to it on the score of economy,—and since moral considerations also are in favour of the practice, bearing in mind the universal feelings of the population at the present time in all countries; it appears that, upon the whole, this is the most eligible and natural mode of disposing of the dead.

3. By the regulation of the price of funerals at certain fixed scales of charges, and by the payment of the whole cost of the funeral in one sum, it will relieve families, at the moment when they are the least capable of attention to such matters, from care or trouble, and from the possibility of extortion.

4. By the saving of expense, which will be effected by the whole of the interments being performed on one system and under one direction, it will render the cost of burial moderate to all classes, and give to the poor the advantage of extramural interment at a reduction of the price which they at present pay for burial in the parochial graveyard.

5. By the appointment of officers of Health, and the establishment of houses of reception, it will diminish or remove the physical and moral evils which result from the long retention of the corpse in single living and sleeping rooms, and thus, for all these reasons, it will fulfil the primary object of the change,

namely, the removal of the whole of the sanitary evils which arise from the present practice of interment.

6. It will greatly diminish the practice now so common of funeral processions in crowded streets. The body will be conveyed respectfully, but silently and unobtrusively, to the cemetery; and within the precincts of the cemetery only will the funeral procession be formed. Here there will be no noise or bustle, none of the discordant and inappropriate sounds and sights that meet the ear and eye in the busy city; no intrusion of the spirit and pursuit of traffic and gain; no persons will be present but those who are called there to take part in the solemn scene, and most of whom will have personal sympathy with it; while all the objects that meet the senses and that call up associations in the minds of the real mourners, will be in harmony with their thoughts and feelings, and will tend to soothe them, as far as anything external can at such a moment exercise a soothing influence.

7. It will increase the solemnity and impressiveness of burial. The peculiar observances and rites calculated to produce this effect must of course be different in different persons and classes, according to different modes and habits of thought and feeling, and different views of religion. But the ecclesiastical authorities will have it in their power to adopt the means which they may deem the best calculated for the performance of this last duty to the dead, in the manner the most appropriate to the wishes and feelings of their respective religious communities.

The religious authorities with whom we have consulted have represented to us their sense of the importance of providing means for the celebration of funeral rites under circumstances which will naturally revive and strengthen the impressions and feelings associated with the usual performance of Divine service. They therefore deem it desirable that in the consecrated part of the eastern cemetery a church should be erected of sufficient magnitude to obtain the effect of solemnity and impressiveness that may be derived from appropriate architecture, and they are of opinion that, however the design and execution of such an edifice may fulfil this object, the end will be still more completely attained by the appropriation of the building as a church in which, especially on the Sundays, the usual services of that day may be performed. They have expressed their conviction that many would attend those services with peculiar interest, from the consciousness of their nearness at that moment to all that remains on earth of the objects of their affections, and that there would be no difficulty in rendering the celebration of funeral rites in a church thus doubly suggestive of the most touching associations, incomparably more solemn and imposing than has hitherto been effected in this country, excepting, perhaps, in some rare instances, as on the occasion of the interment of royal persons, or of men whom the country has endeavoured to honour by the expression of national gratitude for national services. It might be very practicable to

secure also the impressive accompaniment of music, whether by the performance of a single voluntary or by some form of choral service, and it is conceived that there are many on whom the compositions of our great masters would, on such an occasion, have an elevating and consoling effect; but these details must be confided to those who may be charged with the direction of this service in communication with ecclesiastical authorities.

In the unconsecrated part of the ground chapels may be erected, convenient for the celebration of funeral rites and the performance of Divine service, according to the modes of worship of those who dissent from the doctrine and ritual of the Church of England.

The case of the Jews will probably require that a separate ground or enclosure should be assigned to them.

"One of the most striking circumstances in the practice of interments in the German cities and in Paris," says Dr. Sutherland, "is the absence of distinction among the dead of the various Christian denominations—all are buried side by side, without question and without scruple. I met with no one instance in which a denominational burial-place existed. At Frankfort it was stated that the Roman Catholics had religious scruples about interring their dead in unconsecrated ground, and that, although they constitute the minority of the population, the Protestant Confessions made no objection to their consecrating the whole of the new cemetery. They did so, and the dead of both communions sleep together.

"The case of the Jews is the only exceptional one I heard of. Their reasons for separate burial are national as well as religious, and a proper enclosure is provided for their accommodation."

8. It will elevate the celebration of the funeral rites of the poor man, and tend to remove, in respect to the services of the Church in the performance of burial, the distinction between rich and poor. Though funerals may still differ in costliness, and be performed, according to the scale chosen, with more or less expensive materials, a greater or fewer number of attendants, and so on, yet these differences need have no relation to the celebration of funeral rites. We concur in the earnest opinion expressed by clerical witnesses that within the Church, in the performance of the religious service over the dead, there should be no distinction of persons, and that an important moral and religious object would be fulfilled by adherence to this principle.

9. We also fully concur in the opinion which the same witnesses have expressed, that moral and religious purposes cannot fail to be answered, individually and nationally, by making the abode of the dead a hallowed spot, and by investing it with the utmost solemnity and sacredness. The evidence which we have adduced contains the strongest expression of opinion on the part both of clergymen and medical men—the best authorities on this subject, for they truly know what passes in the crowded hovels of our dismal courts and alleys—that the familiarity with the dead which in numerous instances

is at present forced upon the residents there, tends to brutalize the mind, to destroy the sense of the sacredness of life, and to predispose it to violence and crime: but all who are really acquainted with the humbler classes entertain the conviction that they are peculiarly susceptible of the moral and religious impressions naturally produced by the loss of relatives and friends; that the solemn and impressive burial of their dead would strengthen these impressions; and that the places in which their dead repose might be made instrumental in soothing, refining, and elevating their minds.

"National sepulture," says the Rev. H. Milman, "is a part, and a most important part, of national religion. Will it not be possible, as we cannot give to the population of the metropolis and other crowded towns, the quiet, the sanctity, the proximity to the church of the village place of sepulture, to substitute something at least decent, and with more appearance of repose and permanence, if not solemn, serious, and religiously impressive? The poor are peculiarly sensible of these impressions, and to them impression and custom form a great part, the most profound and universal influence, of religion."

The observation of Mr. Loudon places the importance of this influence in a striking point of view; that—

"The church and the churchyard are visited by every individual more frequently perhaps than any other scene, except that of his daily occupation. They are historical records, and they have been so in all ages and in all countries. The country churchyard was formerly the country labourer's only library, and to it was limited his knowledge of history, chronology, and biography. Every grave was to him a page, and every headstone or tomb a picture or an engraving. With the progress of education and refinement this part of the uses of churchyards is not superseded, but only extended and improved."

It is observed in the Interment Report that the images presented to the mind by the *visible* arrangements for sepulture are inseparably associated with the ideas of death itself, to the greater portion of the population, and that neglected or mismanaged burial-grounds superadd to the indefinite terrors of dissolution —the revolting images of festering heaps, disturbed and scattered bones—the prospect of a charnel-house, and its associations of desecration and insult!

A popular writer, the author of the "Necropolis Glasguensis," who has ably developed the moral uses to which well-situated and well-ordered cemeteries may be made subservient, traces to the same source the preternatural terrors connected with death, which so powerfully affected the minds of the masses of the population in the middle ages and down to more recent times; attributing much of this influence to the gothic image which represents Death as a gaunt anatomy stalking through the world and mowing down its inhabitants; an emblem which, it is contended, receives no sanction from philosophy or religion; for the idea suggested by the *Cœmeterion* of the Greek is that of "a bed of slumber;" that suggested by

the *Bethaim* of the Jew is "mansions of the living;" and the Christian emblems of death are those of a gentle slumber and a blessed resurrection. As it was from the gloomy, naked, and deserted cemetery that superstition derived those images and phantoms which tended to terrify rather than to console humanity; so a well-ordered cemetery will have a powerful influence in removing this false gloom of the grave.

"Beneath the shade of the spreading tree," says this author, "amid the fragrance of a balmy flower, surrounded on every hand with the noble works of art, the imagination is robbed of its gloomy horrors. Adorn the sepulchre, and the frightful visions which visit the midnight pillow will disappear, together with the images that depress and the fears that degrade."

In tracing the moral influence of the ancient custom of burying the dead beyond the walls of towns and cities, Mr. Coleridge has pointed out the benign influence of the presence of the objects of nature in associating agreeable and soothing images with the contemplation of death.

"I could here pause with pleasure," he says, "on the beauty which the monuments thus placed must have borrowed from the surrounding images of nature, from the trees, from the wild flowers, or from a stream running within sight or hearing. Many tender similitudes must these objects have presented to the mind; many admonitions, many heart-stirring remembrances: giving to the language of the senseless stone a voice enforced and endeared by the benignity of that nature with which it is in unison. But tombs in crowded towns and cities lose their monitory virtue, and when death is in our thoughts nothing can make amends for the absence of those types of renovation and decay which the fields and woods offer to the notice of the serious and contemplative mind."

With regard to the beneficent influence which it appears to be practicable to exert on the minds of the people by an improved mode of sepulture, particularly as indicated by results which have already in some degree begun to manifest themselves in other countries, Dr. Sutherland observes,—

"The tombs erected in the great ages of antiquity were as remarkable as their temples. The deepest emotions of the human soul have a tendency to find a voice through the beauties of Art, and it is perhaps not too much to affirm that the latter owes as large a debt to those sympathies which encircle the ashes of departed friends, as to the exercise of the religious sentiments. In modern times the same desire to connect the beauties of Nature and Art with the rites of the tomb has shown itself wherever the barbarous practices of the dark ages have given way before enlightened improvement. Some of the extra-mural cemeteries of the Continent are decorated with fine specimens of sculpture and fresco painting; while architecture has also lent her majestic proportions for the same object in the grand structures which adorn the Campo Santos of Italy and Germany.

"The close connection, indeed, which exists between Art and sepulture is universally acknowledged, but its true relationship is still but imperfectly understood. Our own custom of erecting votive statues to the memory of our great men within the precincts of our national temples, is an ever-recurring expression of the same deep sentiment which pervades humanity. Though we cannot build a monument or raise a statue for all who die, yet nature has given us elements which are far more accessible, and which at the same time admit of more beauty of application. We can set apart a due proportion of the earth's surface as a resting-place for the dead, and we can adorn it by the aid of landscape gardening, which is better understood in England than in any other country.

"Under bereavement, there is a harmony and appropriateness in a country cemetery, with its groups of evergreens and trees, its silent and secluded paths, and its broad expanse of greensward intermingled with graves. There is in every human heart a chord capable of being touched by the twofold influence of natural beauty and the solemnities of the tomb. This alone can explain the constant effort towards the expression of these sentiments even amongst the poorest members of society, and surely such a circumstance is too precious to be lost sight of as a possible means of educating and elevating the popular mind amidst so many influences which tend to degrade and debase it."

We cannot conclude this Report without expressing our fervent hope that, aided as we have been by judicious and generous co-operation among all branches of the clergy, and supported by the expression of strong and enlightened public sympathy, we may have been permitted to submit to the Government and to Parliament means which they may render available for putting an end to the great and growing evils of intramural sepulture.

All which we humbly certify to your Majesty.

CARLISLE.
ASHLEY.
EDWIN CHADWICK.
T. SOUTHWOOD SMITH.

Gwydyr House, Whitehall,
February 15th, 1850.

APPENDIX.

I.—MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

Mr. Shillibeer, examined.

1. Have you read the Report on the Practice of Interments issued in 1843?—I have read the Report on the Practice of Interments; and I generally agree with it. I would, however, submit that it is due in justice, that the principle recommended in the Report, at page 192, should be fairly provided for, where it submits whether the tradesmen who have devoted themselves entirely to the business of supplying funeral materials and service, and who will be wholly superseded, could not be brought within any legitimate principles and precedents of compensation for the loss of their existing multiform monopoly, by the whole or any portion of the supply having been transferred to officers responsible to the public.

I have been giving my whole time to the subject during the last twelve years; for the purpose of reducing the expense of funerals, and of affording the lower classes an opportunity of going to cemeteries.

My attention was first directed to the subject at Paris, upon viewing the "Pompes Funèbres" establishment there; and upon cemeteries being formed around the metropolis, I saw that a necessity existed for some economic conveyance to enable the poor and middling classes to avail themselves of the cemeteries, the old-fashioned hearse and mourning-coach being too expensive for the public generally to adopt extramural interments. As I had had much experience in cheapening vehicular transit, having originated and established the omnibus in England, I turned my attention to the subject of an economic carriage to perform the duties of the old hearse and mourning-coach with one vehicle only, and in September, 1841, I obtained Her Majesty's letters patent for my invention, and immediately set one going, to try the feelings of the public upon the subject. The undertakers all set themselves against it, and did all they could to prevent its use; but I found every time the public used the carriage, and it was seen, it was generally approved of, and notwithstanding the opposition of the undertakers, continued to the present time, the patent carriage has gradually worked itself into the good opinion of the public, and the funerals performed by it have been increasing every year; and so firmly is the usefulness of the patent carriage established, that it will have performed this year about 1500 funerals. So strong and illiberal was the opposition to my patent funeral carriage on the part of all the undertakers, that they actually have refused to bury persons who had in their wills directed to be interred by "the Shillibeer," as my patent carriage is called; and the consequences were, that in 1842 I combined with my patent funeral carriage the trade of an undertaker, and taking as a

model for my guidance the Paris Pompes Funèbres establishment, I formed my present establishment in the City-road, upon the principle of supplying all funeral requirements in one charge, upon a graduated scale to meet the views of all classes, from the highest to the lowest, and the consequences have been that the public have so highly appreciated my endeavours to lessen the trouble and expense at the period of a bereavement, that I am now largely employed; and by the system I have established, a very extensive and remunerative trade to myself, and considerably reduced funeral expenses, say on the average at least one-half.

I have likewise, to meet the emergency of the extramural movement, applied the principles of my patent to the purpose of further economising the expense of funerals, and am prepared to adapt my patent carriage to the use of the lower and middling classes, to a further reduced scale, by so constructing it as to convey, totally separate and distinct, three sets of mourners, and three dead bodies, or four if required.

This suggestion has occurred to me to promote the establishment of public cemeteries, which my knowledge of these matters enables me to say must be provided to meet the public and parochial demand, as the present cemeteries are not sufficient.

One thing must be taken into consideration, and that is the duty of 1*s.* 9*d.* charged upon every horse used, if only to go one mile; the inland revenue insist upon this 1*s.* 9*d.*, although the Act of Parliament says you may travel eight miles for 1*s.* if you do not bring back; but the Excise say, the eight miles must be direct and without deviation;—a perfectly ridiculous enactment, as it is impossible to do any job whatever without some deviation, if in a town, to go and take up: the duty must come off.

Again, the assessed tax charged on funeral carriages is 6*l.*, and 10 per cent., or 6*l.* 12*s.* each, the same as any gentleman's carriage. This positively in many rural districts prevents any funeral carriage being kept at all; and at the county town of Pembroke a hearse is kept for the convenience of removal of bodies, but, by reason of the assessed tax, no person can be found there to own it, and it stands in a shed. The assessed tax of 6*l.* 12*s.*, being upon every carriage kept, operates very severely against the keeping of funeral carriages, and is an exaction not justified by law, as the 3rd Vict. c. 17, s. 13.

The Act clapping on the 10 per cent. assessed duties specially enacts, that all carriages kept to be let to hire with post horses shall only pay 3*l.* each duty, without the 10 per cent.; and the postmasters who keep funeral carriages throughout the country are much aggrieved by the continued imposition of the 6*l.* 12*s.* It has prevented in many cases the adoption of my patent carriages.

As my patent funeral carriages would tend much to lessen the expenses of funerals, as to conveyances to cemeteries, I shall be happy, in order to promote extramural burial and public cemeteries, to dispose of my patent right to the Government; and I am also prepared to assist in the movement, by contracting for all funerals, at a fair remunerative charge for a period, upon the same principle as the Paris Pompes Funèbres.

2. You state that you have now some 1500 funerals a-year to attend to; is that in the metropolis?—Yes.

8. And that you would dispose of your patent right to any body of persons who might be charged with the direction of extramural interments?—Yes, to any body of persons who might be appointed.

4. The same as the Pompes Funèbres. Now, when you make that offer, can you say, from your experience, that you could undertake, if the present system of funerals were discontinued within a reasonable time, to enter into a contract to carry out the new system?—I could. I have now a large establishment.

5. Suppose intramural burials were required to be discontinued, say in six months from this time, could you enter into such a contract?—Yes, in three months. But the thing must be gradual, whenever it is commenced. All persons will not come to it at once, any more than they adopted my funeral carriage. I could furnish them all.

6. Could you, a single contractor, carry out the business of the interment to the extent of 50,000 or 60,000 per annum?—No doubt of it. I should not be afraid to attempt it.

7. Will you look to this column of different kinds of service, where a scale of charges has been put down which is considered a practical one? [*Handing the scale of charges.*] Do you agree to that as a practicable scale?

Scale of Expenses for Undertakers' Materials and Services.

	£.	s.	d.
Gentry:—			
Adults	21	0	0
Children	3	10	0
First Class tradesmen:—			
Adults	10	10	0
Children	2	10	0
Second Class tradesmen (undescribed):—			
Adults	6	0	0
Children	1	12	6
Artizans:—			
Adults	1	10	0
Children	0	15	0

Twenty guineas is too low for the gentry. Ten guineas for tradesmen is a fair charge; I would do it for that.

8. Why is that rate for a gentleman's funeral too low?—I could supply for it a funeral that I should think sufficient for a gentleman; but the question is whether the family would think it enough.

9. Now, take the case, say of a funeral of a person of the rank of an officer in the army. Looking to the funeral service that is at present provided for such a class, could you not provide a service as good as is usually provided for an undertaker's bill of 100*l.*?—I should doubt being able to do it for 20 guineas. As far as the funeral service goes, I could; but the gentry expect so much that causes additional cost. Persons in the class of surgeons and lawyers will put up with wearing hat-bands, &c., second-hand. But the gentry will not allow such things, as the custom with them is that gentlemen who wear those things at the funeral should have them given to them.

10. And carry them away?—Yes; so all the bands, scarves, &c., are afterwards sent to the different people. I think 20 guineas is, otherwise, a fair average.

11. The question only goes to this, whether for 20 guineas you would provide a funeral decent and sufficient for the class?—If you look only to the class, 20 guineas would do.

12. That precisely answers the question. You say, for the class 20 guineas is a fair average rate. But if additions to the accustomed service were required?—Twenty guineas would be too low.

13. What do you say to 30 guineas?—Is it to be an affair of profit?

14. If it were done at this scale for 20 guineas, I understand your meaning to be that you are afraid that it would afford no profit at all to the body that undertook it?—These matters require a certain number of men. The other day I buried Mrs. Hawes, the Member's mother. I give each man half-a-crown on ordinary funerals; but here they require double that amount, and gloves. I generally make them find gloves. That is my particular custom; but I am telling you the custom of the trade. I think it right to explain to you all these facts.

15. Well, then, taking the funeral of a person of the condition of an officer in the army, for 20*l.* you would undertake to provide it decently?—For 20 guineas, if you do not intend any profit to be procured from it, nor any scarves to be presented to the friends.

16. What would the coffin cost?—Would it be a lead coffin?

17. No, certainly not.—Then 20 guineas would suffice. I have not a word to say about the scale: if a lead coffin is not to be used, it can be done; but a good coffin cannot be procured under 15*s.*; and then you have the cost of the ceremony, and then the men and the carriage, &c.

18. Then you think the scale is a practicable scale, but a close one?—Exactly. It is a practicable one. Now, a ten-guinea funeral in my scale of funerals is an average style of funeral, excepting the plumes.

19. Without regard to distance?—Without regard to distance. We cannot use a hearse more than once in a day, in the general way; but sometimes I have a hearse running about all day. What I have mentioned would be such a funeral as a doctor, or solicitor, or a respectable tradesman would wish.

20. That would include everything?—Everything except a lead coffin. An elm coffin, a winding-sheet, a hearse and mourning-coach, or my patent carriage and four horses; also six mourners and men supplied with all but black gloves; there would also be pages and truncheons; indeed, there are more funerals at that scale than any other. At first I had only poor Irish to bury; now I have officers and persons of a similar class. I had three of my carriages yesterday at Greenwich and Woolwich.

21. Have you not found great vexation occasioned from the present enormous rates of undertakers' charges?—Yes, very great. Half-pay officers will go and tell their fellow-officers; and it is astonishing what a connexion I have obtained from adopting a moderate scale of charges. These funerals, which they are now charged 10 guineas for, they have been accustomed to pay, at least, 30 guineas for.

22. What is the next lower class in the scale?—It is 6*l.* without mutes. Still you know that in a non-remunerative scale that is a fair price.

23. Now take the case of a labouring man, as given in the scale which you have in your hand?—I think the rate is too low there.

24. What would the expense of the coffin be?—15*s.*, and not lower; and then the superintendence is worth 5*s.* Then there would have to be four bearers; and here I may mention that I have tried to impress it upon the cemetery authorities that they ought to keep bearers ready at each cemetery.

25. That is to say, there ought to be a staff of men in readiness at each cemetery?—Yes; I have often said to them, "I cannot carry out my project unless you assist me." They have answered, "We do not want to assist you; that would offend the undertakers, who are all against cheap funerals." My men I give 2*s.* 6*d.*, upon long and short jobs.

26. In the charge for funerals you make no calculation, then, of distance? Taking one with another, what would you carry the corpse of a person in a middle station of life, and four mourners, for?—That depends on the description of carriage required, and whether they are four-horse coaches or my own carriage. I contract with the Foundling Hospital at 14*s.* each funeral.

27. Is that the whole expense?—That is with conveyance and with mourners. I might materially reduce that rate by the adoption of this triplicate carriage of mine.

28. But an objection is made, is it not, to the body being carried cross-ways?—The friends do not care how the body is carried so long as they follow it.

29. Do you propose, then, that the three coffins shall be placed cross-ways?—I will make a sketch (*hands in a sketch*). That gives your Lordship an idea of what I propose. This carriage is to convey a set of mourners for each coffin, and it is capable of doing three funerals with one set of bearers. Four men could ride outside the carriage, as on an omnibus; different stations could be accommodated, too, in the first, second, and third carriage. The four persons carried outside would act as bearers to take all three bodies, and to conduct the three sets of mourners, and the carriage would be no longer than a police van, which I measured for the purpose of ascertaining. I am quite satisfied that this carriage would bring it down to 1*s.* a-piece each attendant.

30. How many horses would you have to this carriage?—I proposed, if I worked it, to work it with three horses abreast; that would cover the breadth. I could carry four bodies in such a carriage, indeed.

31. We understand it, then, to be your deliberate opinion that some arrangement might be made to achieve economy in funerals beyond what has yet been done in this country?—I have visited the Pompes Funèbres in Paris, several times, and know everything about the system there adopted. My establishment in the City-road has been very successful, and I am sure much good might be effected. Indeed, all might be achieved that can be desired.

32. Though the scale now submitted to you is devoid of profit, yet you think that it might be carried out?—I should like the artizans' funeral to be 5*s.* or 6*s.* more.

33. Your dealings have been with the middle classes principally, have they not?—Within the last half-dozen years I never do walking funerals. People would rather pay 4*l.* for a carriage funeral than 2*l.* 10*s.* for a cheap funeral, if it is to be a walking one.

34. You, no doubt, know that there are numbers of people who have only one room for living and sleeping in, and that terrible scenes occur

therein when deaths occur?—Yes, my men have told me of cases where the children were found playing with their toys on the coffin; and in other instances people have been found drinking gin upon the coffin.

35. You are likewise, doubtless, aware of the danger arising in cases of deaths from small-pox and other contagious diseases, and you are also aware of the importance of the immediate removal of the body; have you had any experience of the plan for intermediate places of reception?—Yes, it is as requisite for other classes sometimes as for the labouring classes. For example, if a gentleman or a tradesman has a relation die in a hospital, they send for me to measure the body and to send for the corpse to take it away immediately. The same is also the case with deaths occurring at a mad-house, and I often have to take the bodies to my house, where I have a place fitted up for the purpose; I am scarcely ever without a dead body in it. The charge is 1*l.* Sometimes I keep them a week, sometimes a month, and the funerals then take place from my shop. That is done by tradesmen, because shutting up their shops is a great inconvenience, from impeding business.

36. You say, also from mad-houses?—Yes, because of the regulation which exists that the bodies shall be taken away immediately. Where persons die in hospitals, or where the family are all living in one room, the immediate removal may be effected; but there is, otherwise, a feeling in the English character that they like to keep the remains as long as possible.

37. But where a single man dies in lodgings, or in an hospital?—Yes, or where an officer dies on board his ship. I fetched away a body lately under those circumstances.

38. From all these cases do you concur in the opinion that well-provided houses of reception, to which a body may be removed, are necessary? Would that not be an important relief, especially to the working classes?—So satisfied am I of it, that during the raging of the cholera I wrote to Mr. Simon, offering a portion of my premises to be appropriated to such a purpose. I was prepared to fence off a portion of those premises, and to have them divided into parish divisions. I offered that to the City authorities at that time.

39. You have probably read the account of the Frankfort house of reception. From all you know of the feelings of the labouring classes, have you any doubt that some such plan here would be not only important, but also gratifying to very many of them?—I have no doubt. It would be both important and gratifying, especially, as you say, to the labouring classes.

40. And you think that the relatives would be gratified if the body were respectfully removed?—I have no doubt of it; and it would also be important as regards health. I was so impressed by this account of the reception establishment at Frankfort, that I was very much inclined to go to inspect and examine it. I feel, indeed, enthusiastic on this subject.

41. You have seen the modern cemeteries. Does not your business bring you in contact with them?—Yes, very much.

42. If they were to be carried out on a larger scale, do you agree that the management of them might be very greatly improved?—That is asking me to cast a slur upon the management of the existing cemeteries.

43. We only require the facts, whatever they may be?—They scold us if we are not there to the minute, and it is not possible always to calculate the time exactly.

44. Could there be any improvement as to the service or the solemnities?—I have not considered it in that light; I have done business with every denomination of Christians. Sometimes I have had a Catholic priest in full canonicals, and sometimes a Dissenting minister. I have Catholic palls from Paris, which are much used by the French, but not by others. I cannot get foreign funerals, except French; because the priest is sure to get hold of them. There is always an undertaker attached to each such chapel of the Catholics. The business that I get from the French in this country is through advertising in the "Times" in French.

45. We will now ask you some questions on the point you raise as to compensation?—The intermediate undertakers need not to be considered.

46. What is the number of principal undertakers?—They are stated here to be 240. You must have men accustomed to the business, to conduct funerals, or one clumsy person or two would throw the coffin down. There is a knack about it which only those accustomed to it can possess. It would not, however, be fair to knock me down, when I have taught the public how to manage these things. There is a Company for them in France. The grant is made to a Company; and a "concession" has lately been made to the Pompes Funèbres Company, for 14 years, which excludes all others from competing.

47. That is, public contractors, the same as the mail service used to be, supposing it to have been with a company instead of a single person, such as Mr. Palmer?—It is a perfect monopoly. I have a French patent for my carriage, but I cannot use it in Paris because of this "concession," nor in Lyons, nor Marseilles. No one can perform funerals but through this Company. An undertaker at Paris, before he could bring the body of an English gentleman, who had died there, from Paris, was obliged to reimburse the Company before the body was removed.

48. What is their scale of charges?—It is extraordinary. They begin with the coffin and then put certain charges according to the rank of the person dying. They bury the poor without any charge, and then go on with a graduated scale.

49. Do all the cemeteries belong to the Company?—Not at all.

50. Is anything paid to the municipality?—Yes.

51. What is the extent of your business now?—There has been an increase of late, and if I had thought it likely you would have asked me, I would have told you all. It is now nearly seven years since I began, on the 1st January, 1842. The first year I had perhaps about 200 funerals to perform; the next year 300; the third 500 or 600; then 800 or 900 the fourth. And now I have not only gone on from the poor to the better classes, but have lost the poor and gone entirely to the better classes.

52. There are persons who give their whole attention to the trade. How many persons are there, in your opinion, deriving considerable amounts from the business, leaving out the smaller tradesmen? Are

there some 40 or 50 such persons?—More than that. There are, perhaps, 100 so engaged.

53. Regarding the intermediate reception-houses; are there not some of the principal undertakers who have places for receiving bodies where required?—All take them in; but they have not places for the purpose. They put them in a shed, or anywhere for the time.

54. Then, it is a part of their business to find some place for such a purpose, but not such a place as persons would like their friends to lie in, even for a short period?—They generally do not know where the bodies are put.

55. But if full and proper accommodation were made, and all respectful attention were paid to the bodies, and it was ascertained that no one could be interred until the signs of death had appeared, the numbers so received at such places would be greatly increased?—No doubt of it.

56. Do you think that if the arrangements were known to be managed well, persons living in single rooms would have any objection to have a body removed from such rooms at once?—They would be delighted with it.

57. If the body were to be removed to a house suited for it?—Yes, certainly.

58. Do you recognise the importance of the appointment of an Officer of Health?—No doubt of it. Having a gentleman of education on the spot, who would point out to the relatives what ought to be done, and who would take much of the trouble out of their hands, would delight them.

59. Do you not think that there would be a great improvement, in consequence, in the business and condition of undertakers?—No doubt of it. I had a case in point the other day. I had a funeral at Camden Town; and when I went to receive instructions, the servant handed me a card. An undertaker saw the shutters up, and put his card under the door.

60. The servants of the upper ranks get gratuities from undertakers, do they not?—I cannot get hold of that kind of funeral. The servants and upholsterers are standing between. If a nobleman or gentleman of fortune die, the upholsterer generally knows it, and so steps in at once, and then goes to the undertaker. I should be happy to give undertakers 20*l.* or 30*l.* for such funerals. There was, lately, the funeral of a Mr. Townley, I think, in Yorkshire. A tailor, next door, got the funeral, and got 1000*l.* for it. And not more than six or seven weeks had elapsed before the widow likewise dies, and he obtains another 1000*l.* for her funeral.

You have not, gentlemen, said anything about the duty. I hope you have not forgotten that. The duty is 1*s.* 9*d.* a horse, or 3*s.* 6*d.* a pair. My last monthly account is here. 1*s.* 9*d.* is the sum the Excise insist on taking. It is that, if they only go a mile. Again, the tax on carriages is an enormous drawback. The duty of 6*l.* 12*s.* often prevents carriages being kept. Many districts would have a carriage, but they will not have it because of the duty of 6*l.* 12*s.* The Act of Parliament says that it should be 3*l.*

61. In small towns and provincial places to what extent could you, living in London, supply their necessities in these matters?—I should

not like to have anything to do with them. I tried at Birmingham and Nottingham, but I found the local influences so great against me among the drapers, that I was glad to get rid of the affairs by selling the carriages. The drapers are the persons most interested. Where the family have been accustomed to buy silks, &c., there they go when there is a death, and the draper goes to the undertaker. There was an instance in the case of Lady Young. She died in the country; at Cheltenham. A draper there had her brought from the country to London. Then I took the funeral to Maidenhead per rail, and then I had to give it up to the family draper, who took the body to the church, close to the family estates. Thus, three had to do with the funeral where one would have done.

62. Is a provincial funeral generally as expensive as a London one?—Yes, invariably.

63. According to your scale, or to ordinary scales?—According to ordinary scales.

64. Then in that case, it would be cheaper to make a coffin in London and send it down into the country?—Much cheaper; but a difficulty arises from the railway people charging first-class fare for corpses and coffins. They lately charged me so for an empty coffin; and then the body was put in the coffin, and they charged the same fare back again.

65. Suppose a country undertaker or carpenter were to make a coffin of this kind, what would be the charge for it?—He could not make it. I frequently have to send them down. I supply Portsmouth with them. If an officer dies, I generally have the funeral. It goes down by the half-past 8 o'clock at night train, with everything ready; the lead coffin, and case, fit for a nobleman. These coffins a country tradesman could not make; they cannot get the materials.

66. Who makes them for pauper funerals?—These are made of half-inch deals. They take those for the chance of getting other funerals, not of the pauper kind.

67. In conducting this change, or in conducting funerals as the Pompes Funèbres are conducted, the great difficulty would be in putting all in hand without the least confusion?—You might make the police useful, and make them bearers to go with the coffin. Then they would not want any at the various cemeteries.

[*The Witness then withdrew.*]

Mr. *Sadler*, Undertaker, Fore-street, Cripplegate.

1. You are a master undertaker?—Yes, and have been for 32 years.

2. Can you estimate how many funerals you have performed during that time?—1800 a-year. It has been the largest business in that portion of the town for a considerable number of years. It has been in our family upwards of a century.

3. With what class of persons have you had to deal?—With all—from the poorest to the nobility.

4. In any special locality?—No, to all parts of London, and sometimes 70 or 80 miles away.

5. May the 1800 interments which you have on the average in one year be said to be entirely metropolitan?—No, but a large proportion; 1200 in the metropolitan districts.

6. Then you perform some fortieth portion of the whole interments of the metropolis, supposing them to be taken at 50,000 a-year. You are aware of much complaint on the part of the public with respect to prices?—Yes; but during the 32 years I have taken an active part in the business there has been but one account complained of. Unfortunately our trade is so thrown on many who have no capital, and who trade with our capital, that their charges are often enormously high. It is a common occurrence in a country town for such tradesmen to say, if they could only have one funeral, it would maintain their family for a year.

7. It appears from the "Post-Office Directory" that there are in the metropolis 751 persons whose names are enumerated as following the business of undertakers: 21 undertakers and auctioneers, 13 undertakers and appraisers, 3 undertakers and estate agents, 36 undertakers and house-builders, 203 undertakers and carpenters, 109 undertakers and cabinet-makers, 26 undertakers and upholsterers, 23 undertakers and packing-case makers, and 417 simply as pure "undertakers."—That is a very erroneous return. I should say there are 3000 men calling themselves undertakers, and who trade with the capital of about 10 houses. We have 500 customers on our ledgers, consisting of upholsterers, appraisers, parish clerks, and tailors. We perform business for them at trade price, but we cannot control the prices charged by that class of men. We allow them a moderate profit, and give them the benefit of our capital. I do not think there are 20 houses in the metropolis where capital is employed in this trade.

8. And you are obliged to give long credit?—Very long. Some accounts have not been balanced for 25 years. We supply them at trade price, and it is the number that pays the furnishers. The public are to be censured, and not the trade, for the present system. If you go to a man, professing to be an undertaker, and whom you know not to be an undertaker, you must expect that he will have his profit.

9. Are not the public on these occasions, when death occurs in a family, in a condition from the blow that has been given, that precludes a common exercise of the faculties generally used?—I should say not. I have been a number of years in business, and I never asked for a funeral in my life. A friend of the family generally arranges in such cases as you refer to; it is known that surgeons take commission on funerals, and also that lawyers often do, even men of high eminence in their profession. The solicitor has the confidence of the executors, and the matter is left entirely in his hands to appoint whom he likes to conduct the funeral.

10. How can the effect of this be avoided and the public protected?—I think it may be avoided by licences.

11. Will you state the variations between your bills, and what you know to have been charged by intermediate persons or the persons dealing directly with the mourners?—That is a difficult question; prices of materials so very much vary: I used to charge 12*s.* for the use of what is called a state plume; now I only charge 5*s.*, and I have known it charged a guinea.

12. What the public say is this: that funerals seldom occur to any private individual, and that that private individual cannot gain experience on the subject: when a death occurs, the parties go to the nearest person who holds out a sign and all the external appearances of an undertaker?—I know one man in the suburbs of London who writes up undertaker, and who keeps an invalid chair, and a patent chair, and all the old nurses in the neighbourhood are in his pay. How am I to compete with such a man? I am employed because respectable families will not countenance such a system; they go to the fountain head.

13. Have you ever had such instances, as when 20*l.* was your charge, that made to the consumer was 90*l.*?—Never so much as that. I remember I was called on to pay 500 guineas in a case where a gentleman, out of Mecklenburgh-square, left it in his will, that a certain number of catacombs were to be purchased. There were 10 catacombs, and I paid 50 guineas for each one. The public would not look to that, but merely to the large amount of the bill, although the great majority of expenses were incurred by the wish of the family themselves.

14. Taking the number of 761 undertakers set down in the Directory, that makes seven undertakers to every funeral; or taking the number set down as solely undertakers, there are three to each death?—Yes, certainly.

15. What number of funerals could you undertake?—I have buried 44 in one day; that was in February, 1843.

16. Could you keep up that rate of business?—I have no doubt at all of it.

17. But even with your amount of business, are there not times when business is slack?—Yes; but we are not only furnishing undertakers, but what are called feather-men also; and then we supply the small furnishers.

18. But many of your men must be at times unemployed?—Yes, and then we keep them at the bench, and they are making coffins; and we have never less than 300 coffins by us.

19. What do you pay your men for funerals?—We pay 4*s.* 6*d.* if it is a day's work. I never heard of 8*s.* being charged, but I have sometimes 7*s.*; and occasionally, when bills have been referred to me, I have been annoyed to see the charges that have been made in a trade which, at the best of times, is an unpleasant one. We are subject to many annoyances; often called into a house full of disease; and men are touching bodies that are half putrid; we are not perfumers, but undertakers; and I am sure the men ought to be paid for such duties.

20. Have you any suggestions as to the protection of the public?—The lower class certainly deserve protection, and they are victimized much more frequently by their burial-clubs than by undertakers. Men get appointed secretary to some such societies; and the entire control of funerals is left to the secretary. I knew a family once in affluent circumstances, who subscribed to one of these societies, in order to obtain the 10*l.* for a respectable funeral; when death occurred, the man came to me, and I buried his wife for 3*l.*; but when he applied to the society for the money, they refused to pay, as they said he had gone against the rules, in not allowing the secretary to have control of the

funeral. I went before the magistrate for him; but the magistrate said nothing could be done for him.

21. Are secretaries generally undertakers?—Invariably so. I do not know an instance to the contrary. The secretary draws the money for himself when deaths occur. Of course this depends on the rule, but it is generally provided that the secretary be the person employed.

22. Have you any other suggestion of remedy or security to the public?—I think a licence, confining the trade to a certain class of individuals, who would be really and *bonâ fide* the tradesmen who possessed the stock and capital, would be effective.

23. Do you think it should be confined to 10 or 20 individuals?—I certainly think many upholsterers would think it worth while to take out a licence; by such a plan you would lose the worthless members of the trade; the competition in the trade and the anxiety of houses to maintain their reputation would be the protection to the public.

24. Do you think, if the number were narrowed, they would make such charges?—It would be utterly impossible; now men make the best of a job, and never expect to be employed again.

25. You doubtlessly know that the retention of the dead, in cases where families have but one room, is, in a sanitary point of view, full of danger?—With respect to danger I cannot say; I never lost one man from any contagion. My belief is, that when the breath is out of the body, all danger ceases.

26. You may not be aware that consecutive attacks of fever often take place amongst individuals living in the same room?—I think that is not very frequent.

27. But the moral evils are considerable?—Yes; I know the general feeling is, bury as soon as possible; and we have to cement the coffin down as early as we can.

28. Are you not aware that bodies are often kept a long time in the living room of the mourners for the purpose of being buried on Sundays?—It is not the custom now to bury on Sunday so much as it used to be. In Marylebone church, sometimes there used to be 16 funerals in one day; and the service used to be read for all, and they would, where possible, manage the graves so that the clergyman, standing in the middle, could read the service for all at once. That is the reason why funerals have diminished so much on Sundays, as people will not put up with such treatment.

29. Are you not often applied to, to receive the bodies of persons dying in hospitals or hotels?—Yes, and I have the bodies often removed to a room on my premises.

30. Would not a house of reception be a great relief?—I should say it would, if the cemetery were a great distance from town. I thought some time since of building such a place opposite Kensal-Green Cemetery. A one-horse carriage would then carry the body, and the friends might meet at the cemetery on the day of the funeral; but I abandoned the idea, as I thought it would have created much feeling against me.

31. But you think, from all your experience, that it would be a convenient arrangement to have a house of reception or a chapel close to the cemetery, where the body might be placed, and where the friends might meet it on the day of the burial?—Yes, and in a room to

receive the friends, so that they might proceed to the place by any conveyance they liked.

32. Supposing a system of extramural burial were adopted, would it not be felt as a great grievance and a great addition to the expense that they had to be conveyed from town to the cemetery?—The expense would not be much increased; an extra shilling is required for each man, and there is a charge for horses. If you go to Abney-Park you pay 21*s.* for a pair of horses, Kensal-Green 28*s.*, while the charge in a funeral on the stones would be 19*s.*; sometimes we pay 10*l.* or 12*l.* for duty alone on a Saturday night. There is a monopoly in the trade in keeping horses and carriages for these purposes; there are only three or four in the trade. It would be a great loss to us to keep our own funeral-carriages, as we require occasionally a large number of horses, and at other times only a very small number. Suppose we kept some 12 or 14 horses, the cost would be great; whereas sometimes we require 40, if we have three or four funerals in a day.

33. Then a great deal of valuable stock is kept waiting for an inconstant demand?—Yes.

34. If you could secure 40 funerals a-day, could not the expenses be diminished?—I do not think so, the numbers vary so considerably.

35. But you are not aware of the Mortuary Returns of the Registrar-General, which show that from week to week, and from day to day, there is an average of deaths, with all the uniformity of a general law?—I find from my books there is a very great difference. There has been less mortality in the months of October, November, and December than generally occurs; they are what we call tolerably good months.

36. But you are aware that that is business coming after an epidemic?—The influenza was much more fatal, to my knowledge, than the cholera ever was; then I was excessively engaged.

37. Have you had any communications from men in your employment as to the condition in which they find families living in single rooms where deaths have occurred?—They are generally in a most wretched state, because the families are extremely poor.

38. But in these cases of there being but one living and sleeping room for each family, have not special evils come under your notice arising from the retention of the body?—I think not. I take care that no coffin goes out of the house in more than six pieces, that is to say, the bottom and lid, the two sides and the ends; then they are made of seasoned materials and pitched inside, because it has been found sometimes that the body rapidly decomposes and becomes injurious, not only to the poor creatures in the house, but also to my men, if the coffin is not securely put together.

39. What particular reasons have induced you to think that it would be desirable to have houses of reception?—Owing to the crowded state of the burial-grounds, I foresaw that some measure would be necessary for the encouragement of cemetery interments, and I thought that the cheapest mode and the best mode was to lessen the length of the processions, and to meet all cases with economy: I think this would decidedly effect economy.

40. Perhaps you are aware that in foreign cities, where extramural interment is adopted, that an objection is made by persons in the line

of the cemetery to the perpetual train of funeral-carriages?—I am not aware, but it is very likely to arise if Government take up the matter; they should see that there is a belt around all cemeteries within which burials would be prohibited. Around Kensal-Green quite a town has arisen.

41. We may take it then as a general conclusion that the evils now suffered by the public are rather to be attributed to the great number of intermediate persons employed in burials, than to the charges actually made by the principal houses, and that whatever remedy may be attempted must be a remedy in the limitation of capitals employed in this field of labour?—Certainly.

42. In a bill before us the prime cost of a shell is put down at 8*s.*?—That is perfectly erroneous; the lowest average would be 40 feet of wood in a coffin, and then there is the man's time to charge.

43. But as a general rule the cost of a funeral is increased with each remove of agency from the principal?—Yes. In Birmingham I thought of opening, as it seemed necessary there that the system should be altered; the mode there is to send to the draper, who goes to the carpenter for the coffin, and then the plumber has to be engaged, and then the carriage-master; thus there are four bills under one. I found that I should have been at war with the drapers, that they were in possession of extensive connexions, and it would have been difficult to get the superior classes to support me, I therefore relinquished the idea. In Manchester they conduct the business in the same way as in the smallest village in an agricultural district, and it is generally so with other large provincial towns. Liverpool, however, is more approaching our way of business within the last seven years.

44. The interments are very heavy in cost in Liverpool, are they not?—I think that arises from the cemetery; there are great numbers in the trade who have no right in it, and there is a spirit of exaction on their part, because they seldom get funerals. Much also is owing to the want of candour in those who employ them.

45. Would it not be a business-like course to place before parties the different scales of charges?—Yes, it would be best to the trade in the hands of a few, to have fixed prices and a printed scale.

46. Do you think that would be a great improvement over the present system?—I do indeed. One of the evils of the present system is the taking of commissions; there are medical men who take commissions, and professional men also—lawyers. I have myself found three servants standing in my way on my leaving a house, and I have had to direct them to open the door before they would let me out. In many cases of noblemen's funerals I know that their confidential servants have been fee'd.

[*The Witness then withdrew.*]

Mr. Bedford, of the Firm of Bedford and Sons.

1. How long have you and your family been engaged in the trade of undertaker?—My father and myself have been upwards of 50 years; and my grandfather before that.

2. How long altogether?—It must be upwards of 70 years. My father has been more than 50 years, and he resides there now.

3. What number of funerals have you had, at any one period, during those years?—I have looked back at my books, and I find that, 20 years ago, we had more than 2100 a-year; that was the average of that time. But now the number is greatly reduced, as we do not bury so many of the lower orders. So the business is very much contracted in number, though not in value. Now, I think the annual number is under 1000.

4. You are aware of the complaints made by the public of the cost of funerals?—Yes, certainly.

5. It is stated that there are upwards of 700 undertakers, at the present time, performing funerals in the metropolis; are there so many?—All sorts of persons undertake funerals. Even butchers, bakers, and all sorts of persons, who are all put down as undertakers; tailors in the country, also drapers, are undertakers too. Publicans are likewise so.

6. Do not also the class of small carpenters undertake funerals?—Yes; all consider themselves undertakers. All engaged with wood in the way of business consider themselves so; sextons, clerks, &c.

7. It appears, from the list in the "Directory," that there were upwards of 200 persons who are put down therein as undertakers only; do you think that is about the number?—They are not so many as that.

8. How many persons do you think there are in the position of respectable undertakers in the metropolis?—I should say about 40.

9. What number of funerals could you undertake?—We have done 2100 in a-year; 2000 we could do, no doubt; but it is now altogether a different system. It was not formerly necessary to attend on every family, as it is now.

10. If the number were, for instance, restricted to 3000 each undertaker, how many would it require to perform all the interments in the metropolis?—About 17.

11. It is stated in the Interment Report (of 1843) that "the number of persons whose sole business is that of undertakers, whose names are enumerated in the "Post-Office Directory" for the year 1843, for the metropolis, is 275. Besides these, there are 258 undertakers and carpenters, 34 undertakers and upholsterers, 56 undertakers and cabinet-makers, 51 undertakers and builders, 25 undertakers and appraisers, 19 undertakers and auctioneers, 7 undertakers and house-agents, 3 undertakers and fancy cabinet-makers, 2 undertakers and packing-case makers; making, in all, no less than 730 persons waiting for the 114 deaths, or between 6 and 7 undertakers waiting for the chance of every private funeral."—There are hundreds that are not down in the "Directory" as such.

12. Thus it appears that, although there is this large number of persons following this business, some 17 persons might, according to your calculation, manage the whole number of interments for the metropolis. What number would it be for each per diem?—Not quite 8 on an average. I could not do more than that, as respectable funerals take up much time.

13. You would undertake 3000 funerals, then, a-year?—Yes, when I see that in my time 2000 have been done. A great majority of those, of course, would not be for the upper classes.

14. Do you not sometimes have men waiting unoccupied, even with the number of funerals you perform?—Yes, sometimes several days without a funeral. Our men are piece-men, and only some of them being paid by the week.

15. What do they have when they go out on a funeral?—At respectable funerals they earn 7*s.* or 8*s.* a-day. Taking the average, they do not earn more, I should think, than 30*s.* a-week. Sometimes for two or three weeks they earn a good deal more.

16. Now, an arrangement to concentrate the business, so that such persons might be constantly employed, would enable a reduction of expense to the public to take place, while there would be steady gain to the tradesmen, would it not?—Certainly.

17. Then you perform a funeral for any one who orders it?—Yes, for a butcher, or any one who wishes one performed, if we think he can pay.

18. Now, what do you suppose to be the difference between the charges you make to such a one, and those he again makes to the customer?—I should think 25 to 30 per cent. I should never allow more; and I have often to tax such bills, but a comparatively small proportion, as I have known people put up with any extortion rather than dispute such a bill.

19. What have you known to be charged?—100 per cent. additional.

20. Have you seen instances of bills charged by you 20*l.*, and charged by them at 90*l.*?—Not so much as that. One was 220*l.*, and it should not have been more than 100*l.* But families will put up with any extortion, as they did in this case, to prevent legal proceedings.

21. Then you concur in the general conclusion, that there are no means of protecting the public but by a concentration of the business?—But then respectable houses could not do it at the proposed prices, without greatly increasing the number of burials, and ensuring them to be performed by them.

22. What should you think, if the average expense of funerals for the gentry were put down at 100*l.* for adults, and 30*l.* for children?—I think that would not be too much.

23. And a funeral for a first-class tradesman, 50*l.* for adults, and 15*l.* for children?—That would not be an unfair charge.

24. Second-class tradesman's funeral 27*l.*?—I should say about 20*l.*

25. And, taking one with another, the higher and lower class artizans, would you think 5*l.* total expenses for adults, and 30*s.* for children, fair?—I think it too much for children, and 5*l.* quite the outside for adults.

26. Are you not aware that a variety of clubs pay 10*l.* for the funerals?—They do not mean that for the undertaker: 10*l.* are paid when a husband or wife dies, and the family can spend what portion they like of that sum on the funeral.

27. But we have a collection of bills charged to artizans. Very recently, a woman who earned her living as a washerwoman, buried her husband, and the funeral came to 7*l.*; is that a fair or usual price?—3*l.* or 4*l.* would be about it.

28. The complaint of the public is, that, notwithstanding the increase in the number of persons engaged as undertakers, the cost of burials goes on increasing?—That is a natural result. There is not enough otherwise to give any profit. Sometimes we have three weeks pass without a funeral.

29. Then, it follows, from all this, that any gain to the public must be effected by thus concentrating the business?—Yes, I have often thought so.

30. Are the chief undertakers' houses in the city?—In all parts of the metropolis. A great many have been many years in existence, the same as ours. We have books of 1690, wherein are charges for men to sweep the streets and carry torch-lights. Since then the ceremonial has been much changed. Most of the men were torch-bearers; and it is wonderful to see the price of things then. A mourning-coach and pair of horses then cost 5*s.*; now we pay 1*l.* 1*s.*; and everything was in proportion. I do not see any difference in my time. The prices have been about the same the last 30 or 40 years.

31. About 1836 or 1837, the practice of searchers was discontinued; what was the original object?—For the protection of life. In case the coffin was closed down, they had power, if they had not seen the body, to have it opened.

32. These people saw every corpse?—Yes, every.

33. There was no objection made to seeing corpses generally?—Oh, no.

34. Well, then, if an Officer of Health were appointed to that duty, it would warrant the supposition that the inspection of the body before interment would not lead to any opposition?—No, not if the duty were intrusted to a respectable person; the only opposition I ever heard was from the dirty people appointed to the duty.

35. It is, then, quite an illusion to suppose that any objection would be made if a gentlemanly man were appointed to such an office?—Yes.

36. Are you not applied to in cases of deaths occurring at hotels, or on the deaths of persons coming up to London, or living in chambers, or being in hospitals, to remove the body to some place until interment?—From hospitals especially, because they are obliged to be removed immediately. I hire a room, or remove them to the room of one of my men, if there are no friends in town who can procure a room to keep them in. I had recently an instance in a lodging-house in Lower Brook-street, whence the body was removed quickly, to avoid the observation of the neighbours.

37. What proportion are now taken to the cemeteries?—Four out of every five; I have scarcely an exception, unless it is to bury in a family grave.

38. Have you taken the poor to the cemetery?—Yes, and that costs 25*s.* or 30*s.*

39. What additional charge does it occasion in respectable funerals?—7*s.* each pair of horses extra. Our men have 1*s.* 6*d.* each more. It does not come to a great deal, but still occasions additional cost.

40. In a funeral which would cost 30*l.*, what would be the additional cost for conveyance to an extramural cemetery?—Between 2*l.* and 3*l.*

41. Then you are of opinion, upon the whole, that it would be an advantage to all parties to diminish the multitude of capitals now kept in this field of supply, and so to concentrate the business, that fewer capitals might be engaged in it, and those constantly?—Certainly.

42. It would enable the principal parties themselves to give the supply at a lower rate?—Yes; now not one-third of our time is employed.

43. If interments were intrusted to any special body, and they were enabled to distribute contracts among the chief members of the trade, would it not enable them to diminish the cost of funeral arrangements?—Everything would depend on a constant amount of business being ensured.

44. The whole benefit to the public must turn on the power to economize the amount of capital and labour to be applied in this direction?—Certainly.

45. The effect would be to reduce the prices to the public, and at the same time to get the service rendered in a more satisfactory manner? At present the competition is not in the direction of reducing prices, but the competition is to get funerals by bribes and otherwise?—Yes. I have often found, when I went for instructions, that several cards had been left at the house by persons soliciting the funeral. A little while ago a gentleman came, even before his wife was dead, and gave directions for the whole funeral.

[*The Witness then withdrew.*]

Mr. John Bedford, examined.

1. Where do you reside?—In King-street. Coffin-furniture warehouse. I deal in metals, plates, &c. that are required for coffins.

2. Do you furnish all the undertakers?—Nine-tenths of them in town.

3. What proportion of this number of 760 persons whose names are given in the "Directory" calling themselves undertakers can be said to share the principal amount of business?—I suppose nearly one-tenth, perhaps nearly 100.

4. Of that 100, how many are principal houses?—Nearly 20, from the first class of undertakers; the lower classes in the trade are very different.

5. Can you give any notion what is the average amount of capital employed by this first class of tradesmen?—I should say some 3000*l*.

6. And the average capital of the next 20?—Something like half that amount of capital for the next 20 or 30.

7. Then the remainder, what sort of capital have they?—The large proportions are poor indeed.

8. Does your business enable you to speak of the evils the public have to suffer from extravagant charges? It has been said they are not the charges of the principal undertakers, but of the intermediate tradesmen.—It may be said to a great extent to be so.

9. In the provinces it appears to be a matter of complaint that the

expense of interment is always so great?—In the country different parties are employed in work which in London is one person's work.

10. Do you concur with your brother, that it would be a means of economizing the expense of funerals to limit the number of persons engaged in the trade?—I doubt whether it would be relished by the public.

11. Complaints are now made of the excessive prices charged for funerals, and it has been stated that what furnishing undertakers have charged 20*l.* for, has been charged ultimately 90*l.*?—I wonder how some of the chief funerals can be performed at the prices. I am sure no system can be adopted to reduce greatly the price of coffins, but something can be done to diminish the cost of removal.

12. Have you had under your notice the evils of confining bodies where families are residing in one room, or have you considered the means of reducing those evils, and the advantages of a house of reception or mortuary chapel?—It appeared to me that it might be avoided by lessening the time of keeping corpses in the houses.

13. But when parties have a strong objection to what would be considered premature interment, does it not follow that such objections should be avoided in some way or other?—The strong objection arises from the fear of the removal being for the purpose of dissection.

14. But if the removal was to a convenient and suitable chapel where the body could be visited at any time, do you think that that would obviate such objections?—There is very great prejudice, and it would take a long time to get it out of the mind of the public.

15. Do you not know that there is a frequent demand on undertakers to provide places of reception for persons dying in hotels, lodging-houses, &c.?—It is so from necessity.

16. Have you heard persons in your employ express their feeling on the subject of the removal of bodies where families occupied but one room?—I have only heard it expressed that it would be a great blessing if the time could be diminished of the body being kept before the time of interment.

[*The Witness then withdrew.*]

Mr. Richard Hayter Jervis, examined.

1. To what firm do you belong?—The firm of Jervis and Sons.

2. How long has your house been established?—It has been established in the parish of St. Martin's since 1686.

3. What is the yearly average number of burials during that time?—We now bury very much fewer in number, owing to the alteration in numbers.

4. What is the greatest number you have buried in any one year?—I cannot say the number in any one year, but I remember as many as 15 in a day; now we have 7 or 8 sometimes. It is now a different class of business, in consequence of the system of advertising cheap funerals within the last few years.

5. Of those burials you now conduct, what proportion may be said to be of the labouring class?—We have very few of that class, unless they come indirectly. The labouring classes always wish to pay expenses

so incurred by a portion at a time, and we have thought it better to cease altogether taking such business.

6. What is the greatest number of funerals you could yourself conduct per diem?—We should have no difficulty in conducting as many as I have mentioned, having had, at one time, about 15.

7. You are aware of the public complaint of the expense of funerals, and that though competition has increased, the cost has not been reduced?—The cost really has diminished, though the public do not think so.

8. There are 761 persons set down in the "Directory" as following the business of undertakers in the metropolis. Of these, 28 are described as undertakers and auctioneers, 13 undertakers and appraisers, 3 undertakers and estate agents, 36 undertakers and house-builders, 203 undertakers and carpenters, 109 undertakers and cabinet-makers, 26 undertakers and upholsterers, 23 undertakers and packing-case makers, and 417 simply as pure "undertakers." What proportion of that number may be considered as having invested some amount of capital in the business?—Some 30 or 40, at the outside.

9. How many are there ranging with yourselves in standing and capital, and not doing less business?—About two at the West end that I can now recollect, and six or seven in the City, I should think.

10. Then 10 or 12 might be considered to be about the number of principal undertakers?—Yes.

11. You are aware that the general feeling is in favour of intramural burial being put a stop to, and that a system of extramural interment should be adopted?—Yes, everything seems tending that way.

12. Do you do much business through intermediate parties?—Yes, our principal business is through intermediate parties, though we have much direct business ourselves.

13. Then you supply the upholsterers and packing-case makers, and the others described in the list above mentioned? Does that include all who undertake funerals?—I should say not; glovers and drapers, for instance, frequently have funerals to perform. I have heard of publicans getting funerals, and, in fact, persons of every class of business occasionally have them.

14. Are you obliged to give long credit?—Yes, generally from one to two years.

15. Have you had occasion to see the difference between the bills sent in by you and those charged to what we might term the consumers?—Not very often. We principally do business with old-established houses, and houses of that class would not, I think, alter prices. Bills have been brought to me that have been laid before officers of the Court of Chancery, but very seldom.

16. Are you not obliged to keep men always waiting?—Of course we are obliged to have them at all hours, and within call night and day.

17. What is the charge for each attendant for a funeral in the middle ranks?—It depends on the distance from town; for a short distance, 1*s.* 6*d.* or 2*s.* would be the charge.

18. We have a great quantity of undertakers' bills here, and I see no charge so low as that; none lower than 2*s.* 6*d.*—I should think the average is 2*s.*; I speak of short distances.

19. But are you not obliged, from the nature of your business, to have

numerous persons and a considerable amount of stock always waiting, as a necessary incident to the business as it is now conducted?—Yes, we could not do without it. We are obliged to have shells and leaden coffins ready to send out at the shortest notice. Indeed, the nature of the business is such that it requires a heavy stock and a good deal of capital, while the returns are not very large.

20. How can you reconcile that with the general complaint of the charges being so high?—Very few persons in business, with an equal amount of capital and labour, are remunerated at a less rate of charge. The business is necessarily so restricted, that it cannot be rapidly carried to any great extent, as is often the case in other businesses.

21. It has been pressed upon the Board by respectable members of the trade, that the charges of which the public have a right to complain are the intermediate charges, and that something in the way of a remedy might be found by limiting the business to those who may be considered as the principal undertakers?—I should not like to cast a slur upon many respectable tradesmen by admitting that. Many conduct funerals and make only fair charges who are not principal undertakers.

22. What would be the average cost of funerals for persons of the grade of clergymen or officers?—Clergymen and officers in the army vary so much in position that it is difficult to say; but I should think 40*l.* or 50*l.* would be near the average amount.

23. Bills for the funerals of the gentry have been shown to us amounting to 150*l.* and 200*l.*; would not the average be much higher than 100*l.*?—The expense depends so much, of course, on the distance and other circumstances, it is very difficult to say.

24. It appears that there are three principal undertakers, on an average, to every funeral; and it follows, therefore, that the stocks and capitals are kept waiting for one service?—Yes; but in many instances the partes keep no stock, and hire their men as they want them.

25. Is it not a practice to give commissions to those who bring funerals?—I have heard that it is; but we have never done so. I remember it was proposed by Archdeacon Cox that persons buried within the City should be buried in leaden coffins; and it was then asked what security there would be that leaden coffins were used. It was suggested that it could only be done by means of licences; so that if any member of the trade failed in doing what was right, he would risk the loss of his licence.

26. Then with the present system there is no practical responsibility?—No, there is not.

27. Have you conducted many funerals to the cemeteries?—Yes, a good many.

28. What is your experience with regard to the expense of removals to the cemeteries compared with that of intramural interment?—The increase of distance must increase the expense, owing to the greater number of hours necessarily occupied by the funeral.

29. Have you reason to think that the cemeteries have very few of the labouring classes and few of the lower portions of the middling classes?—Yes; there seems generally to be the wish to take the funeral to the nearest church, or to the church where the family have been accustomed to go.

30. It has been stated to us that of those living near cemeteries, or with-

in reasonable distance of any one of them, when they have opportunity of preference, 9 out of 10 prefer the cemetery?—I think those living near Kensal-Green would certainly prefer being buried there.

31. Is the expense of funerals in the country greater than in town?—Yes; from the bills I have had to look over, I should say decidedly so.

32. Have you been called on to remove to an intermediate place of reception the bodies of persons dying in hotels or lodging-houses?—Yes, occasionally. They are usually removed at night after 12, when the removal will be less observed.

33. Do you not think that advantage would result if funerals were placed solely in the hands of those who are undertakers?—Yes; there would be less likelihood of over-charge if funerals were placed in such hands. There are persons who but seldom get funerals to perform, and who are resolved to obtain as much profit from it as possible, taking advantage of the state of the feelings of the relatives at the time.

34. Do you think that the system of extramural interment, either in one cemetery or several, would necessitate a whole change in the mode of service?—Yes, particularly with respect to the poorer classes. There must be a double staff; one for the removal of the bodies to the hearse, and another to receive the bodies when they arrive at the cemetery. Men could not be sent down the whole distance; the expense would be too great. With some such arrangement I see no difficulty.

35. It has been stated that it would be an objection in having any one line of extramural interment; that it would crowd the road with funeral processions?—That would be an objection if they travelled by road.

36. Are you not now impeded a good deal in places of thronged traffic?—I always try to avoid any crowded streets as much as possible.

37. You think that, though not difficult, the adoption of any such change as is now proposed would necessitate an entire change of practice?—I think so.

II.—*General Report on the Practice of Intramural Interment in the Metropolis.*

My Lords and Gentlemen,

In compliance with the instructions of the General Board of Health, I have carefully considered the evidence formerly laid before Parliament on the subject of intramural burial, and also that contained in the Report of Mr. Chadwick on the practice of interment in towns, and in the replies sent from the incumbents of parishes within the metropolis to the queries issued by the Board. I have personally visited and inspected a large number of the metropolitan burial-grounds, and all the suburban cemeteries, the experience derived from which I have compared with the practice of burial abroad. I have besides perused the evidence of Dr. Milroy, Dr. Waller Lewis, Mr. Ranger, and Mr. Bowie, who were charged with special inquiries as to the sanitary condition of

the graveyards and vaults of the metropolis, in connexion with the late epidemic cholera. Having at various times reported to the Board on the details, it appears to be unnecessary again to repeat them, and I now beg respectfully to lay before you the general conclusions from the whole inquiry.

The physical and moral evils resulting to the public health from the practice of burying the dead within the limits of the metropolis, have been so frequently pressed upon the public attention as to have become matter of notoriety. The practice is one in itself so reprehensible, that neither ancient customs nor prejudices can be allowed for one moment to have any weight in its defence, and nothing but the apparent difficulty of dealing with the question could so long have set aside the dictates of common sense and right feeling in regard to it.

Experience has shown that certain conditions must be fulfilled in order to the decent disposal of the dead with a due regard to the safety of the living. It is by no means a matter of indifference, in a sanitary point of view, where a dead body shall be deposited. If the burial of the dead amongst the dwellings of the living be so harmless a custom as some persons seem to imagine, it may be fairly asked why they do not advocate an extension of the principle, as in their view of the case there can be no reason why interments should not take place within the houses themselves. The question is merely one of degree, and it appears to be of little moment whether the dead be buried in the basement-stories of houses or only separated from them by a thin brick wall, burst in by the weight of the earth of an adjoining churchyard, with which "fragments of human bones fell in."*

One of the most common fallacies put forward by the advocates of intramural burial is of the following kind. They say: "We have lived all our days close to burial-grounds, and have nevertheless arrived at a good old age." An objection such as this may be raised with equal propriety against any other deduction from sanitary investigations. Some of the oldest people, for example, are to be found amongst the inhabitants of cellars and other unhealthy localities. Difference of susceptibility is of course the explanation. In the most unhealthy districts of our towns it is no uncommon thing for one-half of all the children born to die before they reach the age of five years; but notwithstanding this, 50 per cent. live beyond that age, while it is at the same time obvious that had the whole generation been equally susceptible to the morbific influences which destroyed half of it, all must have perished. This difference of susceptibility is evidently a final law.

Again, it is an observed fact in regard to specific nuisances, that their effects do not always exhibit themselves in their immediate neighbourhood. The effluvia which result from putrefactive decomposition are generally lighter than common air, so that they have a tendency to ascend slightly in the atmosphere, where they are diffused or carried by the winds, and sometimes produce their effect at a considerable distance. The following passage from the Report on "the Practice of Interment in Towns" illustrates this fact very clearly:—"Whilst M. Parent-Duchâtelet was looking for immediate appearances of acute disease on the robust workmen living amidst the decomposing animal effluvium of the Montfaucon, I have the authority of Dr. Henry Bennett for stating that he might

* Dr. Milroy's evidence on the state of St. Clement Danes graveyard.

have found that the influence of that effluvium was observable on the sick at half a mile distant. When I was house-surgeon at St. Louis (says Dr. Bennett), I several times remarked that whenever the wind was from the direction of the Montfaucon, the wounds and sores under my care assumed a foul aspect. M. Jobert, the surgeon of the hospital, has told me that he has repeatedly seen hospital-gangrene manifest itself in the wards apparently under the same influence. It is a fact known to all who are acquainted with St. Louis, that the above malady is more frequent at that hospital than at any other in Paris, although it is the most airy and least crowded of any. This, I think, can be only attributed to the proximity of the Montfaucon. Indeed when the wind blows from that direction, which it often does for several months in the year, the effluvium is most odious." In this instance the putrid exhalations proceeding from a mass of decomposing refuse produced their characteristic effects upon susceptible constitutions at the distance of half a mile, while the immediate neighbourhood appeared to escape. Similar illustrations are familiar to all who have paid attention to the subject, and during the recent outbreak of cholera such were not unfrequently met with; the epidemic seizure having been, in these special cases, simply the index of the existence of a morbid sensibility, dependent on the antecedent action of unhealthy exhalations from a greater or less distance.

I witnessed several outbreaks of cholera in the vicinity of graveyards, which left no doubt on my own mind as to the connexion between the disease itself and such local influences. Two instances occurred at Bristol, the particulars of which I reported at the time to the General Board of Health. The results in both were most disastrous. Long-continued contact with the morbific influences proceeding from graveyards and other nuisances appeared to have produced such a degree of susceptibility, that as soon as the epidemic touched the locality the people fell before it. There is evidence to prove that a large fatality took place also during the last cholera epidemic in neighbourhoods immediately adjoining the graveyards of the metropolis.

It is not always easy to separate the effect of each specific cause of disease where a number co-operate, but after a most extensive experience the evidence which has come before me has produced on my own mind an abiding conviction that the effect of many causes of unhealthiness, and that of churchyards amongst others, has been very much underrated. I have no doubt whatever that the burial-grounds, as at present constituted, are a continual source of pestilence, slow perhaps in its operation, and hence overlooked by ordinary observers. They are undermining the constitutional stamina of thousands of our town populations, while people are denying that they have any injurious tendency; and it is only when some epidemic comes to try it like a touchstone, that the consequence of long antecedent neglect becomes so apparent as to rivet attention and excite alarm.

It has sometimes happened that fatal results of a very sudden character have been produced by the exhalations from graveyards in the metropolis; but such, alas! is the small comparative importance attached to the accidental loss of human life; that these occurrences have passed by almost unheeded, and the system remains to this hour the same.

Similar events formerly took place in various Continental cities,

and are to be numbered amongst the reasons which led to the final abolition of intramural interments in France and the German States.

In the General Report on the subject of interment in these countries, which I have had the honour of laying before the Board, I have detailed the various principles which have been kept in view in framing laws and regulations. These have been based on facts of so very obvious a nature, that they can hardly be called in question, and upon experience which has been obtained in the successive advances made by different states. In every instance the new system of interments is satisfactory in a sanitary point of view, as compared with that which it superseded, although some of the regulations exhibit a much greater degree of improvement than others.

In London, however, I am sorry to say that there are no indications of any change for the better. The frightful exposures which have been made before Parliament as to the state of our burial-grounds may have led to the partial abatement of nuisances of more than ordinary magnitude; but speaking generally, it may be safely stated that the language contained in the Parliamentary Report, and the descriptions in the Report on "the Practice of Interment in Towns," are as applicable now as they were at the time these documents were laid before the public.

Both have been extensively circulated, and every parochial authority in the metropolis has had ample opportunity of becoming acquainted with their contents; but I am decidedly of opinion that no material improvement has been effected. The graveyards of London are still the plague-spots of its population. The putrid drainage from them pollutes its wells, seethes beneath its dwellings, and poisons its atmosphere. Some parts of the metropolis are still honeycombed with deposits of the putrescent remains of millions of its citizens, just as with cesspools and other abominations. The vaults of many churches are still little better than charnel-houses, which it is absolutely dangerous to enter, or, if they have been ventilated, the noxious effluvia which they ceaselessly generate have been poured forth to contaminate the atmosphere without.

The moral incongruities which result are no less striking than the physical, and, in their way, no less injurious. The last resting-place of the dead is profaned by the ceaseless clamour and noise of the living. The voice of prayer is still painfully mingled with the irreverent uproar of a densely peopled city, and it is to be feared that the whole aspect of the funeral ceremony is in some cases more like the getting rid of a nuisance than the tender consignment of the remains of humanity to their last repose.

These things ought not to be considered as the result of individual culpability, but rather as the consequence of a vicious and dangerous system, which admits of no improvement, and whose only remedy is entire abolition.

It is absolutely necessary, from considerations of public health, that places of interment should be located at a suitable distance from inhabited dwellings, and yet there is not one within the whole circuit of the metropolis that is not more or less surrounded by human habitations. Some of them, indeed, have become so closely walled-in by houses, that they have to be reached by narrow passages, or through low doorways leading from the public street; and were there no other circumstance than

this one of improper position, I consider that it would afford an adequate reason and justification for prohibiting their use in all time to come.

It appears to be forgotten, that in addition to the covering of the dead with a few inches of earth, it is requisite to make provision for the graduated and speedy decomposition of the corpse. A certain amount of surface and depth of soil is necessary, and the body must also be permitted to repose until dissolved into its elements. Continental experience seems to point out a superficial area of about 50 square feet for each adult interment, and a period varying from 10 to 20 years of undisturbed possession of the ground, as being the most suitable conditions, one corpse only being interred in each grave within that period. It is hardly necessary to point out that the churchyards of London cannot possibly fulfil these requirements. The result of the whole continental inquiry is, that they are considered to be indispensable alike for decency and safety abroad, and certainly they can be no less so in the metropolis of England.

The interests of truth require that I should state distinctly that these things have been neglected—that human remains have been tossed into holes by cartloads—that the memory of the dead has been insulted, and the sanctity of the tomb in not a few instances violated—and that from the very necessity of the case practices have not unfrequently been resorted to which are as indefensible on moral as they are on sanitary considerations.

With the exception of a few pieces of new ground, a large proportion of the metropolitan graveyards appears to consist chiefly of a rich compost of organic matter, bone-earth, and rotten wood, mixed with a little soil. The evidence of Dr. Milroy, as to the state of these grounds, is sufficient to prove this fact, and to show that it is impossible to effect any amelioration of their existing state. Its truth was also fully demonstrated by the experience afforded by the various attempts made by the Board to apply the provisions of the Contagious Diseases Prevention Act to the metropolitan graveyards. It was found that the employment of disinfecting agents of a chemical nature could not be intrusted with any prospect of success to sextons or other parochial officers; that the orders of the Board were in many cases resisted or disobeyed; and that in the few instances in which they were carried out they only afforded a partial remedy for an evil which extended over the whole metropolis. It was found that the existing authorities clashed with each other, and that when churchyards were shut up, because no lesser remedy appeared applicable, the burials were only transferred to others in the immediate neighbourhood; and had the law been completely carried out and obeyed, it would have led to the actual closure of all the graveyards in the metropolis, as the only means of protecting the public health.

Some burial-grounds which I have myself visited appear to consist entirely of crushed bones and unctuous animal mould. A few days ago I saw a grave in the process of being opened, in a graveyard in Upper Whitecross-street, belonging to the parish of St. Giles, Cripplegate. It was about 6 feet deep, and appeared to have been cut out of a "breccia" of human bones. The gravedigger was breaking or laying bare large fragments with every stroke of the pickaxe, and on the surface there were five skulls, four of them entire, and the bones of apparently as many skeletons, so fresh that the soft parts might have been just removed. The sexton stated, that the ground had not been touched for 20

years, which, if correct, affords a very decisive proof of the necessity of having sufficient space to ensure decomposition.

It has been observed that vegetation conduces very much to rapid dissolution, provided there be only one body buried at a time, but in such instances as the one mentioned above, it could produce little effect.

Where bodies are heaped together a process of transformation takes place in the textures, and decay is interfered with, and thus every step taken in prosecuting a system of interments founded on erroneous principles, tends to increase and complicate the difficulties. It is not too much to assert, that it would require centuries of judicious management to purify the soil of the existing burial-places, so as to make it fit for fresh interments, even were there no objections arising from local position.

It is a recognised fact that different soils facilitate or retard the process of decomposition, and hence it is the custom on the Continent to choose the most suitable soils which can be obtained. Loose, open, porous ground is what is generally selected, but it will be seen that such a choice is utterly impracticable in London, as it has, in fact, been already made without any regard to the necessary conditions.

Another most important element in the position of a burial-place is its relation to the prevailing winds, as it has been found that, even if it be placed at what might seem a convenient distance from inhabited houses, the effluvia are distinctly perceptible when the wind blows over it towards the town. This observation has been made in regard to some of the best-conducted cemeteries abroad, and has led to the adoption of a regulation by which eastern, north-eastern, or northern situations are directed to be chosen. From the very nature of the case no such regulation could of course be made applicable to the London graveyards.

We must either suppose that the universal judgment of Europe on this subject is wrong in requiring these conditions, and that the metropolitan practice is the only right one, or we are driven to the conclusion that the prevailing system of intramural interments is erroneous in principle, mischievous in its results, and cannot too speedily be put an end to.

This view of the case is, I am happy to say, entertained by a large proportion of the clergy and parochial authorities, and it appears to me that no difficulties will have to be encountered in effecting the required change greater than those which have already been met with and overcome in other parts of Europe.

On a careful consideration of the experience which has been obtained abroad, I have arrived at the conclusion that the necessary changes can only be carried out under Government authority. A vigilant, responsible, and perfectly disinterested management is indispensably necessary, whether it be to prevent injury to the public health, or for the becoming disposal of the dead. These duties are so directly of a public nature, that they can never with propriety be delegated to private enterprise. I know of no instance abroad in which the State has vested its own responsibilities in this respect in any irresponsible officer or joint-stock company. Such experiments have been sufficiently tried in this country, and the results of private speculation have been, in some matters at least, of a character similar to those with which Parliament has charged the General Board of Health to interfere.

It might have been expected that the suburban cemeteries of the metropolis would have exhibited proofs of acquaintance with those practical sanitary considerations which have attracted so great a share of

attention abroad for many years past. So far, however, is this from being the case, that, of the eight cemeteries, five consist of soil either wholly or in great part composed of clay, which is, perhaps, the worst of all kinds of ground for interments. The consequence of this improper selection of soil has been that the period of decay is prolonged in an extraordinary degree.

The method of burial also displays a want of the recognition of sound principles in this important matter. The graves, whether common or freehold, are often dug to enormous depths,—in the latter class of graves to 20 feet or more. The ground may be disturbed at any period, and without regard to any sanitary conditions, merely on the order of the proprietor. The clay has to be rammed down hard after each interment, and these freehold graves sometimes contain as many as 12 or 15 coffins, hermetically sealed from all atmospheric influence, and they are preserved entire for years after the whole would have been resolved into dust had a proper system of interment been adopted. In one cemetery there are two kinds of soil—clay and marl. Coffins which have been interred eight years in the former are sound and undecayed, while coffins interred in the latter are completely decomposed and their contents dissolved, except part of the bones. From all the information I have been able to procure, it appears that hardly any poor persons are interred in these cemeteries. Other important considerations might be stated, but those adduced afford to my mind sufficient proof of the absence of that special knowledge which the Legislature ought to require in any parties who take upon themselves the responsible duty of providing for the burial of the dead.

Abuses arising from carelessness, as well as from motives of a mere pecuniary nature, must be prevented by stringent regulations. The vast public importance of the whole subject requires this; but it would be practically impossible to ensure their execution through the agents of numerous speculative companies, over whose proceedings no public Board could exercise any efficient control.

I have no desire to underrate the value of private enterprise, but I think that if there be one thing more than another which does not legitimately come within its sphere, it is the guardianship of the dead of a great nation, and the reverent care of all the affections, memories, and aspirations which ought to surround them. The time has surely come when all trafficking in the spoils of poor humanity should cease, and when the whole process of interment should be undertaken as a solemn and pious duty, which society owes equally to the remains of all her members, however exalted or however humble.

In executing this trust it should never be forgotten that the very fact of death exerts an influence either for good or evil on the community at large. All the rites of sepulture among ancient nations clearly point to the recognition of this influence. The tombs erected in the great ages of antiquity were as remarkable as their temples; and while we wonder at the matchless sculptures which decorated their religious edifices, we should not forget that admirable works are also to be found on the funereal urns and monumental structures of the same era.

The deepest emotions of the human soul have a tendency to find a voice through the beauties of Art, and it is perhaps not too much to affirm that the latter owes as large a debt to those sympathies which encircle the ashes of departed friends as to the exercise of the religious

sentiments. In modern times the same desire to connect the beauties of Nature and Art with the rites of the tomb has shown itself wherever the barbarous practices of the dark ages have given way before enlightened improvement. Some of the extramural cemeteries of the Continent are decorated with fine specimens of sculpture and fresco painting, while Architecture has also lent her majestic proportions for the same object in the grand structures which adorn the Campo Santos of Italy and Germany.

The close connexion, indeed, which exists between Art and sepulture is universally acknowledged, but its true relationship is still but imperfectly understood. Our own custom of erecting votive statues to the memory of our great men, within the precincts of our national temples, is an ever-recurring expression of the same deep sentiment which pervades humanity.

Such memorials, from the very nature of the case, must be limited in number. We cannot build a monument or rear a statue for all who die; but nature has given us elements which are far more accessible, and which at the same time admit of more beauty of application. We can set apart a due proportion of the earth's surface as a resting-place for the dead; we can adorn it by the aid of landscape-gardening, an art which is better understood in England than in any other country; it is possible to erect our cemetery chapels in a style far superior in architecture, and better adapted to the purpose, than any which at present exist; we might, even surpass the grandeur of the majestic cloister which encloses the Campo Santo at Munich; and by thus combining together, as far as practicable, the beauties of natural landscape with artistic decoration, we might make the last abode of the dead at once appropriate for its sacred purpose and an instrument of moral good to the people.

Imperfect as they are in some respects, our own private cemeteries are places of public resort. Some of them have even more than a local reputation, and are visited by strangers from great distances. The experience already obtained proves to a demonstration that the ties between the living and the dead are still as powerful as ever, and that, if severed at all, it is by human ignorance and selfishness.

When were the crowded graveyards of London known to be hallowed in the affections of the people? Is it not true that they pass them either without a thought, or possibly with a shudder at the incongruities which they present, and yet the same people delight to throng the cemeteries on the outskirts of the metropolis? What is the reason of this difference? I answer, it is to be found in the greater fitness of the locality. Under bereavement there is a harmony and appropriateness in a country cemetery, with its groups of evergreens and trees, its silent and secluded paths, and its broad expanse of greensward intermingled with graves. There is in every human heart a chord capable of being touched by the twofold influence of natural beauty and the solemnities of the tomb. This alone can explain the constant effort towards the expression of these sentiments even amongst the poorest members of society; and surely such a circumstance is too precious to be lost sight of, as a possible means of educating and elevating the popular mind, amidst so many influences which tend to degrade and debase it. All must suffer the loss of friends; and it should be provided that all may know the precise spot where their friends repose.

It is reckoned a mark of considerable feeling if a poor man visit the grave of a member of his family a few times after the body may have been interred in one of the churchyards of the metropolis; but we may confidently anticipate that such cemeteries as London ought to possess would be his place of resort for years, and that the hallowed impression would be continued for a much longer period than under any circumstances is possible with our existing system of interments. Who can tell to what extent such influences might operate in humanizing those characters which are now marked by so many traits of brutality? Under a judicious system of interments the very poorest would be able to recognise that the grave in reality levels all distinctions, and that, although there might be some external and less important matters in which one family might have the means of surpassing another, there would still be a most impressive equality in all that is essential to the process of burial. In every instance there would be the same reverent removal and care for the dead; the same regard for the sympathies and feelings of survivors; the same voice of prayer, and comfort, and hope would be uttered over every one alike; the same sweet strains of harmony would float over all the dead; and when every rite which religious feeling and national custom could dictate had been fulfilled, each individual coffin would be committed to the earth, "dust to dust, ashes to ashes," with the same pious care; and every mourner, of whatever rank or condition, would be able to retire with the perfect conviction that no rude hand should henceforth violate the tomb, and that for long years to come he might linger around the graves of those whom he loved most while alive, and from whose memories a "still small voice" would find an echo in the hearts of the living.

There is much which tends to isolate the various classes of society from each other; but the rites of sepulture have something in their very nature which sets at nought all merely conventional distinctions, and around the tomb, at least, every mourner should be enabled to realize that there are sympathies which link together the whole brotherhood of man.

After a careful consideration of the present condition of the burial-grounds within the metropolis, as deduced from the various sources of information already mentioned, and also of those principles of improvement which are contained in the methods of procedure adopted on the Continent, and to some extent recognised in the arrangements of our own cemeteries, I have arrived at the following conclusions, which I beg respectfully to lay before the General Board of Health:—

First. That extramural places of sepulture should be provided, with due regard to position, soil, drainage, and extent.

Second. That these places of sepulture should be put under responsible management, with authority to regulate the practice of interments.

Third. That so soon as adequate accommodation shall have been provided, and suitable arrangements made, the practice of burying the dead within the limits of the metropolis should be absolutely forbidden.

I have the honour to be,

My Lords and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

JOHN SUTHERLAND.

Gwydyr House, Whitehall,
February 13, 1850.

III.—*General Report on the Practice of Interments in Germany and France.*

My Lords and Gentlemen,

After having examined into the operation of the present system of intramural interment in various parts of this country, and arrived at conclusions as to the methods which appeared to be best adapted for effecting a change of system, by removing the burial of the dead from the dwellings of the living, and which conclusions I have at various times had the honour of presenting to the General Board of Health, I was instructed by the Board to proceed to certain parts of Germany and France, in company with Mr. Cresy, in order to inquire into improvements in the practice of interment in those places, with the view of ascertaining whether any additional facts or experience could be derived from cities in which the system of intramural interment had been abolished, and where the whole funeral ceremonies were conducted under one management.

In compliance with the instructions received, we left England on the 24th November last, and proceeded to Frankfort-on-the-Maine, where our first detailed inquiry was held.

Thence we proceeded to Berlin, and, after having carried our investigations in that city as far as seemed necessary, we went to Leipzig, to confer with Mr. Ward, the Consul-General, as to the practice of interments in the kingdom of Saxony.

After inspecting the cemeteries and making the necessary inquiries we proceeded to Munich, and obtained full information as to the system pursued in that city. At the conclusion of the inquiry at Munich, Mr. Cresy returned direct to England, having completed the architectural department, which was specially committed to him, and I went to Stuttgard and Paris, from whence I returned on the 14th inst.

In carrying on the inquiry, the churchyards and cemeteries were carefully inspected, and the necessary measurements taken. The various laws and regulations in force were examined into, and the whole practice and detail of interments, so far as our time would permit, were made subjects of inquiry. In most instances, however, it was deemed to be expedient not to wait for the more minute matters of detail, which we found could be sent direct to England, but rather to ascertain the leading principles which had been kept in view in providing cemeteries and conducting interments, in order to be enabled to lay these before the General Board of Health at as early a period as possible.

In order to the full understanding of the present position of the interment question in the countries visited, it may be necessary to state very shortly the various steps in the way of improvement which have from time to time been taken. The burial of the dead in and around churches appears to have originated in the desire for special distinction

on the part of civil Governors.* In process of time the higher orders of the clergy were interred in the same localities, and the practice gradually descended to different ranks of society, until the burial of the dead amongst the dwellings of the living became the universal practice in all Christian states. This innovation, however, was not allowed to pass without protest on the part of enlightened men, who foresaw the evil consequences which must in the course of time result to an increasing population by a continually augmenting cause of unhealthiness. Various parties were enlisted on both sides of the controversy; but the first real practical advance was made by the magistracy of Nuremburg in the 15th century, who provided for the burial of the dead outside the city. At a later period, in 1541, they forbade interments within any church in the city.

To Nuremberg, then, belongs the honour of having achieved the first victory over an ancient and dangerous abuse. The contest on the subject of intramural interments was renewed and carried on vigorously throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, and even universities did not consider it beneath them to throw the weight of their influence on the side of sound principles. A multitude of facts were continually coming to light which showed the fatal effects resulting to the public health from permitting the accumulation of so vast a quantity of putrefying matter in the midst of a dense population, and by degrees men became convinced that a vigorous effort must be made to abolish the evil. France, however, was the first state to take the lead, through the decrees of her Parliaments, which were carried into effect by successive cities and towns. The Emperor Joseph II. reformed the entire system in Austria, and the German States have followed the great movement one after the other. The French invasion aided the work most materially in Germany, Holland, Spain, Portugal, and Italy; and it must be admitted that our own country has been one of the latest in Europe to deal with the question.

The progressive nature of these changes explains the unequal advance of the laws and regulations of different states. In some, the law simply forbids burials in churches and within inhabited places, while it makes no provision for the removal or regulation of the graveyards to be shut up. In other instances, in addition to these prohibitions, there are specific enactments, directing the position and kind of soil to be chosen, the superficial extent and depth of graves, the time of burial, and other similar matters.

The subject of interments, and the method of conducting them, has in every instance occupied public attention; but in this also progressive advances have from time to time been made, and the systems adopted in different states vary materially in point of efficiency and completeness. The manner of verifying the decease differs also in different states, and has undergone various improvements. The origin and progressive nature of these ameliorations being kept in view, I next proceed to state that, in all the cities visited under the instructions of the Board, it was found that intramural interments had been abolished.

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* It appears hardly necessary to point out that the burial of the dead in and around churches was a corruption of the practice of the early Christian Church.

Frankfort owes this great boon to the enlightened care of its Government.

The Prussian law states that "no corpse shall be interred in the inhabited parts of towns."

By the law of Wirtemberg it is enjoined, that in providing any new cemetery, or in enlarging and altering existing places of interment, it is requisite to choose a place better adapted for the purpose, outside towns and villages, and at some distance from the principal roads.

At Munich there is one large cemetery beyond the suburbs of the city.

In Saxony, where the legislative provisions are less complete than we found them elsewhere, there is no special prohibition of intramural burial, but public opinion is so far enlightened that the practice in reality does not exist. In a communication received from Mr. Ward he says, "I can assure you that neither in Leipzig, Dresden, or in any part of Saxony, are there any burial-places within the towns. There does not appear to be any written law prohibiting such burial-places generally, nor is it necessary, the practice of burying in towns being quite unknown here."

In France, by Art. 1 of the Décret of June 12, 1804, it is forbidden to effect any interment within the circuit of towns or villages.

Interment in churches was forbidden in Frankfort and throughout the German empire by the Emperor Joseph II.

The Prussian law prescribes that "no corpses shall be interred in the churches."

By the law of Wirtemberg of October 6, 1808, "interments in churches are forbidden."

The French Décret already cited prohibits interment "in churches, temples, synagogues, hospitals, public chapels, and generally in all closed edifices where the citizens unite for the celebration of their worship."

No interments take place in the churches in Munich.

By the laws of Saxony burials in churches are prohibited, except where there are vaults so constructed as to prevent the possibility of danger to the people.

From information received in the various cities, these laws appear to be thoroughly carried out, while in all instances their execution is accompanied by suitable provisions for the safe disposal of the dead.

The Government at Frankfort, while it put a stop to intramural burial, also provided a public cemetery of 30 Frankfort acres in extent. They made a gift of the site, and vested the management of it in a commission.

In Prussia the extramural cemeteries belong, in most cases, to the *Gemeinde;* and as no parties can lay out any new cemetery without proof of sufficient necessity and the consent of the ecclesiastical authorities and police of the locality; the public safety is thoroughly cared for.

At Leipzig the cemeteries are the property of the St. John's Hospital.

At Munich the cemetery is under the direction of the magistracy.

In France the Décret of June 12, 1804, Art. 2, prescribes the

removal of cemeteries outside towns and villages; and by Art. 7 the communes, which are obliged by the preceding articles to shut up their burial-places and to procure a new cemetery, have the power to do so through their municipal councils with the approval of the Préfets.

Practically speaking, the whole management of these cemeteries is vested in responsible parties; the proper regulation of them is considered a highly important department of medical police, and is in no one instance left to irresponsible persons. What we should perhaps call the statute law uniformly recognises the necessity for continued watchfulness to prevent abuses and to protect the public health, and in several cases it goes the length of prescribing matters which would be much better carried out by intelligent and responsible regulation.

At Frankfort the responsible parties are the Commission, who hold their appointments from the Government.

In Prussia the regulation of burial is placed under the authority of the magistrates.

Throughout Saxony the magistrates are charged with and are responsible for the due execution and observance of the laws relating to burial.

It is the same in South Germany; and in Paris the whole process of interment constitutes in itself a department of the Prefecture of Police of the Seine.

The great advance which foreign countries have made over our own, in providing suitable places for the burial of their dead, appears to have proceeded partly from a greater amount of intelligence being spread abroad as to the sanitary evils resulting from intramural interments, and partly from a desire to cultivate a better state of feeling among the people. On making inquiry of various well-informed parties, it was stated to us that the changes which had been introduced into the arrangements were in perfect accordance with the popular feeling.

In every instance the use of extramural places of sepulture is accompanied by special regulations for conducting interments, whose objects, as was stated to us in several instances, obviously are, to ensure a becoming respect for the dead, and to protect the survivors from extortionate and unnecessary charges; while proper sanitary precautions are also enforced. These regulations in general detail every step of the procedure which must take place from the time of death to the moment of interment. They prescribe the parties to whom information of the death is to be given, the steps to be taken in verifying and recording the event. They point out the parties who grant permission for interring the body, and the officers to whom the friends must apply in order to having the burial carried out.

Unity of system is the obvious end in view in all, but this end is approximated to differently in different countries.

In most instances regulations have been made and acted upon in fixing on sites for the new cemeteries. There is an obvious preference given to eastern, northern, and north-eastern positions, in order that the effluvia may be carried away from the city by the prevailing wind; due regard, however, being had to possibilities in each special case. At Berlin, convenience of position in relation to the city-gates,

and a proper distance from inhabited houses, appear to be the points chiefly attended to.

There is an obvious preference also given to loose sandy soils, as being most suitable to facilitate decomposition.

In addition to the fact of removal from among the abodes of the living, all the cemeteries visited were placed at some distance from the boundaries of cities and towns. The extent of the intervening space is made matter of special regulation in most instances. In certain cases this space has been encroached on by dwellings, but not to any great extent. Sometimes one extremity of the cemetery almost touches the town, and the other stretches away into the open country; while at others a clear vacant space of from a quarter to half a mile intervenes between the nearest houses of the suburbs and the cemetery wall. The continental towns do not increase so rapidly as ours; and hence in practice it would be needful to place our new cemeteries at a greater distance than is customary abroad.

Graves are generally divided, as with us, into different classes; some of which are private property, while others are held for a term of years.

The space set apart for family graves varies with the wishes of the family.

Those graves which are purchased for a term of years, vary in size in different countries. From 30 to 40 square feet appears to be the allowance for an adult grave. The largest proportion I have seen is that adopted in the cemeteries of Stuttgard, where a space 10 fee long and 5 feet broad (Wirtemberg measure) is set off for each grave. In the middle of this space the grave is made.

These cemeteries are the only ones I saw, in which the grave-space appears to be of a proper size. It satisfies the eye, and were the general laying out of the cemeteries suitable to this great point in their practical use, I should prefer those of Stuttgard to all others I have seen, and at the same time feel disposed to recommend the grave-space as sufficient. Apart from the laying out, however, the space allotted for the cemeteries is not large enough.

The depths of graves adopted in different states are very various. At times this important element appears to be regulated by the nature of the soil, the age of the corpse, and other similar considerations. In Paris it is about 4½ feet for an adult, while in some parts of Germany it is 7 or even 11 feet.

In all the countries visited, with one exception, it appears to be either the law or the practice to bury only one body in a grave. I found the advantage and necessity of this fully appreciated.

One great object in choosing a site for a cemetery, and in framing regulations for its management, is certainly to obtain a speedy decomposition of the dead interred in it. It has been recognised abroad that the piling of coffins one over another in the same grave interferes with the decay, and in certain soils, if the graves be crowded with dead, decay is arrested, while *transformation* of the organic matters takes place. The great utility of vegetation in shortening the period of decay I found also to be recognised; and it was stated to me at Paris, as a reason for burying only one body in a grave, that the quantity of vegetation which could be placed on the grave

could dispose most readily of the gaseous matters of one body and shorten the period of interment by eating out the nutritious matter of the soil; but this was not the case where more than one body had been buried, and that the quantity of organic matter was found to be much larger when the ground was reopened in such cases.

At Leipzig, where there is more licence than elsewhere, it is customary to bury two or three corpses in a common grave, as in England; this custom is, however, the only exceptional one we met with, and tends to show the greater benefit of a well-organized and stringent set of regulations in regard to this important practical point.

In some parts of Prussia, and also in Paris, the practice of burying in trenches exists. It is a highly objectionable one, although used only for the very poorest classes of the community. A great amount of decomposing remains is brought into a circumscribed space, and the proper graduated decomposition is interfered with. Another great disadvantage is the bad moral effect which this kind of interment has on the poor. It severs their associations with the dead at once, for it is practically impossible to recognise the precise spot of sepulture, and it has thus a tendency to make the loss of parting with friends even more severely felt than it would otherwise be.*

As if to prove the inherent mischief of this system of interment, it may be stated that the only exceptional case to the general good management of the continental cemeteries which we witnessed resulted from the use of a trench in the Cemetery of Cologne, where a scene was exhibited very similar to those presented by the usual run of overcrowded churchyards in England.

One of the flagrant evils of the existing system of burial in England is the want of some regulation as to the period which must elapse before a grave which has once been used can be reopened for a second interment. The obvious importance of preventing a too early reopening has not escaped attention abroad, but the period varies remarkably in different states.* In the cemeteries of Paris it is fixed at five years, which is stated to be sufficient for the soil, climate, and vegetation. At Munich it is nine years, but I was informed that the term was somewhat shorter in practice. At Leipzig it is 15 years, and in some parts of Prussia it is 20 years or upwards. The period fixed for reopening graves by the Frankfort regulations is 20 years, but such is the indisposition to interfere with the repose of the dead, that rather than proceed to go a second time over the cemetery, the commissioners purchased a large additional piece of ground, which is now being used for interments; and although above 21 years have elapsed since the cemetery was opened, no grave has been as yet made use of a second time. The period of interment in the cemeteries of Stuttgard varies from 15 to 18 years, and it has been found in this latter case that the time required for the decay of a body varies in each of the cemeteries.

The period for reopening graves must necessarily depend on the rate

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* Sometimes the coffins are deposited in three layers, with earth between each, and the whole covered with three or four feet of soil. At Paris there is only one layer permitted, which is covered with about six feet of earth. Reprehensible as the custom unquestionably is, it is not so hurtful, either physically or morally, as the practice of burying in common graves and pits at present followed in the graveyards and cemeteries of the metropolis, Liverpool, and Manchester.

of decay, which is influenced by a great variety of circumstances, so much so that I could not learn that any inquiries had been made, the results of which could afford facts for guidance in any given case.

The period of decay for the bones was in all cases stated to be very greatly longer than the time permitted for reopening the graves. In the generality of instances the bones have to be collected and re-interred.

Vaults exist in most of the cemeteries visited, but it was stated at Frankfort that they were becoming less used, and there appears to be a growing conviction in favour of interments in open ground.

Interments take place in family grounds, in graves purchased for a term of years, and, in some instances, in trenches.

The following are the prices of each class of graves in different cities:—

	Family Graves.	Temporary Graves.
Paris	20*l.* and upwards	2*l.*
Munich	1*l.* 5*s.* to 83*l.*	Charged along with interment.
Frankfort	16*l.*	Charged along with interment.
Leipzig		12*s.* to 1*l.* 4*s.*

Laws or regulations fixing the period of interment were found in most of the states visited. In North Germany no interment can take place until after the lapse of 72 hours from the time of death. In South Germany the period fixed is 48 hours. The delay may be shortened by the police authorities, on the certificate of the medical attendant, or other proper public officer, that earlier interment is necessary on sanitary grounds, but the option of burial is still left with the family. In Paris no interment can take place until 24 hours after the death has been verified.

The object of this delay appears to be mainly to avoid premature interment, and in some instances to prevent crimes of violence from escaping detection.

The fear of burial before the absolute extinction of life has also occasioned the establishment of houses of reception, to which the dead may, if the friends see fit, be removed soon after death, and where they may be carefully watched until unequivocal signs of decomposition have shown themselves. These houses vary somewhat in structure and arrangement in different states. They have appliances for lighting, ventilating, and warming, and generally there is an apparatus to be attached to the fingers and toes of the corpses, so arranged that the slightest movement would set loose an alarum in the room of the watcher.

Some of the contrivances used for this purpose are very ingenious, but, after careful inquiry at all the cities where we found them to exist, we could not learn that any case of resuscitation had as yet occurred. Even this negative result, however, has doubtless tended to allay the fears which formerly existed, and which are still to some extent prevalent, as to the danger of premature interment; and as all such feelings tend to disquiet the public mind, their removal cannot be looked on as unimportant service rendered by these institutions.

The reception-houses are also supplied with baths, galvanic apparatus, and suitable restoratives.

In every instance the use of these reception-houses is voluntary; but the authorities have issued very stringent regulations for their manage-

ment. A very small proportion of the dead only are sent to them, at least in North Germany, and of those sent, the majority, so far as we could learn, came from hotels and private lodgings, or they were sent on account of their having no friends. In a few cases, persons have directed by their wills the deposition of their remains in the reception-house.

In South Germany, especially at Munich, the reception-houses are more used, but in the latter city they appear to form part of the usual funeral pomp. The bodies of the dead are dressed, and raised up in the coffins. They are decked with flowers and the biers ornamented. No charge is made for receiving and watching the body, except at Munich, where the expenses, including the decorating of the corpse, are considerable. It is in fact a kind of lying in state with the dead exposed—a practice which was at one time not uncommon in some parts of our own country. There is now, however, a more subdued and healthy state of feeling, and such a usage would be inconsistent with the habits and sentiments of our population.

Another and very important class of reception-houses exists in connexion with the German cemeteries, and which are intended solely for the relief of families who may be desirous of having their dead removed at as early a period as possible, on sanitary grounds, but before the expiry of the legal period of seventy-two hours which must elapse between death and interment. In these cases there is supposed to be no doubt of the certainty of death. The body is placed in the coffin and the lid screwed down. In some instances it is the practice to have part of the lid over the face made to turn on a hinge. There is a reception-house of this kind attached to the new cemetery at Leipzig, which had one coffin in it while we were there, and it was stated that as many as fifteen had been in it at the same time. The relations send the coffins, which are committed to the care of the sexton till the period of burial.

At the cemetery of Cologne, which is situated at some distance from the city, there is a reception-house constructed of wood, in which we saw no fewer than eighteen coffins. They appeared to be those of persons in humble circumstances, and it was stated that they were removed by the sexton and his assistants from the churches in the city where the burial-service had been performed, and that they would be buried in due time, but without the presence of the friends and relatives. Many such reception-houses exist, and the medical profession appeared fully alive to their necessity and importance, but their use was stated to be not so extensive as could be desired.

The experience of Germany, however, can hardly be taken as a criterion from which to draw conclusions as to the utility of reception-houses among our own population. Speaking generally, the same amount of overcrowding which exists in our larger towns is not found in Germany, and hence the necessity for such accommodation is not so obvious. Every one conversant with the dwellings and habits of the poorer classes in England must be aware that overcrowding exists to a great extent in all our large towns, and they must frequently have observed the strange intermixture of the dead with the living which this circumstance at present necessitates. Instances constantly occur of corpses being sent to the premises of undertakers, on account of the impossibility of retaining them in private dwellings; and during epidemics, as for example the recent outbreak

of cholera, the necessity for some place for receiving the dead previous to interment must have pressed itself on every one who was really conversant with the state of the poor during that terrible visitation.*

Another reason of the comparatively limited use of these establishments is to be attributed doubtless to their want of taste in construction and arrangement. The failure of one at Leipzig is, indeed, expressly attributed to this cause. I know of no instance in which the style of architecture or decorations are such as would be likely to

* I have received a great deal of evidence on this subject from medical men in all parts of England and Scotland, a few specimens of which I subjoin. The retention of the dead in rooms occupied as living or sleeping rooms is necessarily almost universal among the poor. During the late epidemic, however, it very frequently happened that two or more corpses were laid out in the house at the same time. I once saw three adult corpses in one room, and a person ill with cholera in the only other room in the house. On another occasion, on a hot summer's day, I saw two corpses in a small apartment in which there were three persons sitting. There was a fire at the same time in the room. Dr. Duncan, of Liverpool, states that he has met with 15 instances of two corpses in the house at the same time. Mr. Trahan, one of the Union officers at Liverpool, mentions 24 such instances. Mr. Cooper, medical officer to Wolverhampton Union, says that he has had 18 or 19 such cases; and similar information has been derived from many localities. Corpses of persons who have died from typhus, scarlet fever, and other epidemics, are also retained for a period beyond what is safe (if, indeed, any retention be safe in such cases). The practice in many districts appears to be to keep such corpses three, four, or five days. Mr. Pearse and Dr. Tripe, of Plymouth, state that they "have seen much evil and delay in cases of deaths from typhus and epidemics," from the undue retention of the corpse. Mr. Kimpton, surgeon, says, "I have known corpses of persons who died of typhus and scarlatina kept several days in rooms with the living, and believe in some instances it was the cause of disease extending to other persons in the house." Dr. Duncan, of Dundee, writes that interments of persons who have died of epidemic disease are "in general delayed too long amongst the poorer classes." Dr. Roe, of Plymouth, says, "I have seen the coffin lying on the bedstead in one part of the room, the food cooking in another, and the dressmaker making mourning in a third. . . . . I have never known an interment hurried in the slightest degree because the person died of typhus or other epidemic; not even when there was only one room for the living and the dead."

These few notes of evidence will afford a slight idea of the state of matters among the poor; and it is in vain to look for any alteration until proper accommodation for the dead be provided. This difficulty must be obvious, and it has struck many careful observers. Mr. Stott, surgeon, Manchester, says, "I know no instance in which the removal of a corpse from a dwelling-house preparatory to interment took place; *no place, that I am aware of, having been provided for such purpose.* The withdrawal of the living from the dead would be *most difficult* in the majority of instances. A receptacle for the dead appears a desideratum, and I think would be well received by the people themselves." Mr. West, surgeon, Hull, writes, "I have known the corpses of persons who have died of typhus, scarlatina, measles, and small-pox retained in the dwellings of the poor for a much longer period than I considered safe;" and he adds, "there should be immediately provided some places or convenient localities where the poor might deposit their dead under proper regulations, having due regard to their feelings; and although objections would be raised at first, they would soon give way to the urgent persuasion of the persons who would be placed in charge of such depositories."

This obvious necessity led to the actual opening of a reception-house at Leeds during the late outbreak of cholera. Mr. Radcliffe, surgeon to the union, states that on the first outbreak of cholera in Leeds the Board of Guardians, at his request, erected such a house in connection with one of the cholera-hospitals; "and to this place," he says, "I caused to be conveyed many bodies from *single* and other rooms previous to interment—indeed, almost immediately after death; and when the poor found that the dead were treated with decency and respect, I found no opposition to their being sent there."

Here, then, was a very natural solution, and, at the same time, a successful one, for a great difficulty arising from the overcrowded state of our cities and towns. Perhaps no clearer proof of the existence of the evil could be given, and no more satisfactory method of getting rid of it indicated, than the preceding evidence affords.

induce the poor to send their dead to the reception-houses; but, on the contrary, there is much that is repulsive in most of them. The halls at Munich are the least objectionable I have seen, but the decoration of the dead and the religious accompaniments are apparently the real causes of the popularity of that establishment. There are as yet no houses of reception attached to the cemeteries of Paris.

In all the cities visited, the governments have combined the various departments of the process of interment under one system, of greater or less extent and efficiency.

At Frankfort the management of the cemetery, and the whole process of removal of the body, the care of it while in the reception-house, and the interment, are placed in the hands of the same Commission, which has issued an excellent code of regulations, embracing all the steps of the funeral, except the providing of the coffin, which is left to the family.

At Berlin the burial-grounds are under a different management from the interments, but the conducting of the funeral from the house of the deceased to the place of burial is intrusted to a contractor in all instances where a hearse is used. "Walking funerals," and some particular classes of burials, are exempted from the operation of this contract; but notwithstanding this, about 5000 burials a-year are conducted by the contractor, who pays 8000 thalers a-year to the municipality for his privilege, which was originally one belonging to the Crown. The exemption is permitted by the contractor.

At Leipzig everything having reference to interments is under surveillance of the magistrates. The prices of graves and some items of expense are regulated by tariff; and there are regulations for conducting the interment. In this case there are two coach-proprietors, who have a right to keep hearses, besides those belonging to the town, and their vehicles are generally used. The system at Leipzig is by no means so good, however, as it is in some other parts of Germany.

At Munich there is an establishment which manages the whole matter of interments, under the magistrates. The only exception is the providing of the coffin, which is left to the family. Taking for granted that all the forms of procedure are adapted to the population, the Munich system is one of the best in Germany, and appears to be well carried out, and to meet the wants and wishes of the people.

Perhaps the most perfect system of interments exists in Paris. After years of experience it has worked well; and it was stated to me by well-informed parties that it was perfectly satisfactory to the people. In Paris, as at Munich, and Frankfort, every step which has to be taken, from the moment of death to the filling up of the grave, is clearly prescribed, and is a necessary portion of the system. The cemeteries belong to the city, and the funerals are performed by a contractor, while a large revenue accrues to the clergy from the procedure, but all the parts of the machinery are linked together in so simple a manner, that every interest is cared for;—the relatives of the deceased are thoroughly protected from overcharges: the clergy receive their legal dues: the municipality is paid for the grave; and this is all done through one agency, the contractor, to whom the friends apply, and through whom they pay all demands. Proper securities are also taken to satisfy the demands of the law in discovering crimes, if any such have been committed.

In every instance the system of contracts and burials by Government agency is so arranged as to allow a large amount of liberty to the survivors in ordering or providing the materials for the funeral.

At Frankfort the relatives provide the coffin and any number of mourning-coaches, besides the tariff, they may think fit. At Berlin they may dispense with the contractor altogether, should they prefer a walking funeral. At Munich the system is somewhat more stringent; but still the kind of coffin, and the amount and kind of decoration of the dead in the reception-house, are left to the friends of the deceased.

At Leipzig a large amount of latitude is also given in incurring expense; and at Paris, where the regulations are so strictly enforced that no one can interfere with the legal rights of the contractor, the friends have every necessary liberty in fixing on the style of funeral to be adopted, and the kind and value of the articles to be used.

In short, in all cases the dead may be buried according to a fixed charge and in a number of classes, any one of which may be chosen to suit the circumstances of the family: the Government taking care that a decent and orderly mode of burial is provided at a moderate rate, and that the survivors are protected from imposition. In some cases the prices of all extras are fixed by tariff, so that the cost of any addition to the class can be ascertained, but in others the risk of such additions is left with the family.

The following examples of the cost at which funerals are conducted under this system of general management may be interesting, by way of contrast with the high rates charged in England:—

Cost of Interments in the Cemetery of Frankfort-on-Maine.

		£.	s.	d.
Above 15 years of age.—	1st Class	4	3	4
,,	2nd ,,	2	10	0
,,	3rd ,,	1	16	8
,,	4th ,,	1	5	0
,,	Paupers	0	13	4
From 10 to 15 years of age.—	1st Class	1	16	8
,,	2nd ,,	1	6	8
,,	3rd ,,	0	16	8
,,	4th ,,	0	10	0
,,	Paupers	0	8	4
From 5 to 10 years of age.—	1st Class	1	6	8
,,	2nd ,,	0	18	4
,,	3rd ,,	0	13	4
,,	4th ,,	0	8	4
,,	Paupers	0	7	6
Under 5 years of age.—	1st Class	1	0	0
,,	2nd ,,	0	13	4
,,	3rd ,,	0	6	8
,,	4th Class and Paupers	0	4	2

These charges include the following items:—1st, the fee to the commissary; 2nd, the cost of the grave (if a family grave be not purchased); 3rd, the attendants; 4th, the hearse.

An ordinary family burial-plot, if purchased, costs about 16*l.*

Each class of funerals has its appropriate number of attendants, as follows:- 1st class, 12 attendants; 2nd class, 10 attendants; 3rd class, 8 attendants; 4th class, 4 attendants. An additional attendant is supplied to carry the cross before the funeral, where necessary.

There are four hearses, one for each class. The tariff, it will be observed, provides no mourning-coaches; but the commission has agreed with a coach-proprietor to use his mourning-coaches, provided he will supply them to the families requiring them, at 6*s.* 8*d.* for each coach.

A second-class adult funeral, including all charges for commissary, hearse, ten or eleven mourners, and half-a-dozen mourning-coaches, and a grave for 20 years, would only cost 4*l.* 10*s.*, exclusive of the cost of the coffin, which must be provided by the relatives. The religious services and masses have to be provided separately, but there is a tariff for masses also.

Prices of Interments at Berlin.

It has been already stated that the funeral procession is the only matter contained in the contract in this city. There are five classes of convoys, the charges for which are as follows:—

	£.	s.	d.
1. The great hearse with 6 horses	2	5	0
Eight attendants, at 2*s.* 6*d.* each*	1	0	0
	3	5	0
2. Great hearse with 4 horses	1	10	0
Eight attendants, at 2*s.* 6*d.* each	1	0	0
	2	10	0
3. Great hearse with 2 horses	0	15	0
Eight attendants, at 2*s.* 6*d.* each	1	0	0
	1	15	0
4. Middle hearse	0	4	6
Six attendants, at 1*s.* 9*d.* each	0	10	6
	0	15	0
5. Little or poor hearse	0	2	3
Four attendants, at 1*s.* 3*d.* each	0	5	0
	0	7	3

The grave has to be paid for separately to the church, and the expense of digging to the sexton.

The coffin has also to be provided.

It is part of the contract at Berlin, that all paupers must be transported to the cemeteries free of expense; and the attendants are obliged to conduct pauper funerals without remuneration, on account of the high rate of payment which they receive for the other classes of funerals.

All mourning-coaches have to be provided by the families if they require them, and at their own risk. The usual price is 3*s.* 6*d.* each.

* The attendants are employed by the general manager, and pay a small tax to the contractor.

Cost of Interments in the City of Munich.

In Munich there are five classes of adult funerals, and three classes of those of children. The expense of each class bears a relation to the nature and position of the grave in the cemetery. The purchase of a family grave is a separate matter, and not included in the tax for interments, which is as follows:—

Interment Tax for Adult Persons.

Classes.	Without family grave.	With Family Grave.		
		In the Arcade.	On the Walls.	In the Sections.
	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
1	3 17 10	8 12 10	5 1 5	4 6 2
2	3 0 10	8 4 4	4 2 8	3 7 6
3	1 16 8	7 18 4	2 15 0	2 5 0
4	0 19 9	..	2 0 6	1 12 5
5	0 10 11	..	1 14 3	1 5 11

In these charges are included the following items, and the annexed prices are for an interment of the first class in a family grave in the sections of the cemetery:—

	£. s. d.
Bell-ringing	0 2 0
Interring (Einsetzen)	0 18 4
Digging the grave	0 13 4
Grave-place	0 16 8
Examination of the dead	0 0 10
Hearse	0 8 4
Bearers	0 6 8
Soul-nun	1 0 0
	4 6 2

The purchase-money for a family grave (single) in the sections varies from 1*l.* 5*s.* to 3*l.* 15*s.*

Expense of Funerals in Leipzig.

There are four classes of funerals in Leipzig, and the items and the high charges remind one very much of our own system and its expensive results.

The price of each item is for a funeral of the first class. The amounts stated below are what the people usually spend.

(Richest Classes.)	£. s. d.
To the clergy	0 18 0
To St. Thomas's school	1 12 2
Bell-ringing	0 15 0
Cross-money	0 3 0
To the bell-ringers	0 4 0
To the body-washer (a woman)	0 4 0
Fees	0 3 6
For the poor	0 1 6
St. John's Hospital bell	0 0 7½
Examination of the body	0 2 3

The extra expenses are as follows:—

	£.	s.	d.
The conductor of the funeral	0	15	0
Oak coffin, lined and covered	6	15	0
Tax on the coffin	1	4	0
A double grave	1	4	0
A hearse, 2 horses, and driver	2	6	6
Pall and duty	2	10	3
Ten mourning-coaches and duty	2	5	0
Eight singers at the grave	0	8	0
Minimum trinkgeld* expected	3	0	0
	24	11	9½

If a clergyman be present, he generally obtains a honorarium in addition to these expenses.

The total cost for a funeral of the middle class, with its extras, comprehending most of the items in the first class, is about 8*l.* 13*s.*
The total cost for a funeral of the poorest class is about 2*l.* 1*s.* 9*d.*

Paupers are buried free of charge.†

Cost of Interments in Paris.

The experience of Paris affords a good illustration of the public benefits resulting from a free competition in conducting interments.

The customary inducements to extravagant expenditure are removed, by first deciding on the articles to be used, and then fixing the prices which the contractor is permitted to charge. The public has free selection as to the materials, but they cannot be charged more than the contract price. The tariff once fixed by authority is put up to public competition, and the contract sold to the person who will undertake to return the largest percentage on the funeral accounts.

This sum is set apart for the support of public worship, and is paid over to the various churches and chapels of Paris. The following result of the competition for the present contract will show the manner in which the system operates:—

Names of Competitors.	Percentage offered to be returned.
	Fr. *c.*
M. Guesnier	50 0
M. Lemaistre	71 56
M. Baudoüin	67 55
M. Prevost	57 50
M. Sery	
M. Béchet	45 33½
M. Raymond	62 45
M. Duprat.	68 72 10/100

* Drink-money, commonly given in Germany at the conclusion of an undertaking.

† The following are the proportions of burials under each of the four classes:—Out of 1500 funerals, there are about, 1st class, 35; 2nd class, 50; 3rd class, 250; 4th class, 500. The remainder would be buried out of the poor's fund. The prices under each class comprehend both the tariff charges and other objects which are considered *customary*. The results of want of system in increasing expense are clearly shown by comparing the Leipzig rates with the others.

No less than 71½ per cent. of the present contract prices is paid over to the different "fabriques" and "consistoires" of the capital.

The charges for religious ceremonies and decorations also constitute a large item of expense, and these things, as well as the percentage returned by the contractor, must be allowed for in estimating the absolute cost of the interment and its necessary accompaniments.

The service is divided as follows:—

1. The ordinary service.
2. The extraordinary service.

The ordinary service consists in providing a coffin for the deceased, and transporting the coffin *individually* (which is specially ordered) to the churches or chapels, and thence to the cemeteries; and the inhumation of the body after its arrival at the cemetery.

For persons above seven years of age a funeral-car drawn by two black horses must be provided, driven by a coachman, and accompanied by an ordonnateur and four bearers. For children under the age of seven, a litter is used, carried by two bearers, and preceded by an ordonnateur. The coffins must be covered with a black or white drapery. The tariff price of this service is the following:—

	Francs.
Transport of children under 7 years of age	10
„ persons above 7 years of age	20

(The amounts are paid at the "mairies," into the "caisse municipale." *)

The tariff prices of the coffins used are—

	Francs.
For infants at 2 years and under	2
From 2 years to 7 years	3
Above 7 years a coffin ("à 3 pans")	6
„ „ ("à 6 pans")	7
„ „ ("à 8 et 10 pans")	9

Coffins of oak or lead are charged according to tariff.

Every other thing required by families, except those named, belongs to the *extraordinary service*, which consists in procuring for families, on their request, corbillards, mourning-coaches, draperies, candles, and other objects named in the tariff, and in lending the needful decorations for the religious services.

Service Extraordinaire.

This service is divided into nine classes, to suit the means of all portions of the community. Each class of objects is divided into three sections:—

1. Those which belong to religious services.
2. The service of the enterprise.
3. The anniversary religious services.

The first section is subdivided into two parts, to wit:—

The *personnel*, which comprehends the amount paid for each church-officer, including the cost of the funeral mass; and

The *matériel*, which comprehends candles, draperies for the altar, church, or pulpit, crosses, holy-water basins, bell-ringing, &c.

Section 2 is subdivided into three parts:—

* The contractor, however, receives back 7 francs for each interment.

First, the *maison mortuaire* and its decorations, in which the corpse is laid out in state, drapery, candlesticks, candles, crosses, &c.

Second, the decorations and hangings of the church or chapel.

Third, the funeral cortège: the arrangement and cost of which for the third class, the one generally used by respectable people, I subjoin :—

	Francs.
Hearse with two horses, harness with plumes and silver trimming	120
For each carriage with mourning drapery 15 francs, the number not to exceed four	60
For each varnished mourning-carriage 12 francs, the number not to exceed four	48
A master of ceremonies	12
Two "officiers en manteau," to carry the "pièces d'honneur," at 12 francs each	24
Two embroidered cushions, with crape to receive them	20
Eight mourners, or "valets du pied," at 8 francs	64
Twelve torches or flambeaux, at 3 francs	36
	Francs 384

The third section, relating to anniversary services, is subdivided into—

Personnel, comprehending the services of the clergy, masses, &c.; and *Matériel*, such as candles, decorations, &c.

The following abstract of the amount paid for each class under the several heads mentioned, will give an idea of the relative expenses incurred :—

Objects.	Cost in each Class.								
	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.
	Francs.	Francs.	Francs.	Frs. c.	Frs. c.	Frs. c.	Frs.	Frs.	Frs. c.
Religious ceremonies	240	191	138	101 50	58 75	39 50	18	15	13 25
Matériel	374	290	143	108	80	17 50	7	5	1 50
Maison Mortuaire	239	221	115	79	69	46			
At the church or chapel	1,640	1,266	730	268 50	161	9	76	39	5
Cortège	520	586	384	229	134	74			
Anniversary services	180	144	104	76 75	51 75	32 50	..	..	..
Matériel	469	375	198	144	105	31 50	..	..	..
Total	3,662	3,073	1,812	1,006 75	659 50	250 0	101	59	19 75

Each of these classes is so far fixed that no one can combine two classes together.—The hearse appertaining to the class chosen must be used, and also all the articles ordered must be those of the class chosen, and not those of any other class; but the family may leave out any articles of the class, the hearse only excepted.

Besides the tariff of objects used in each of the nine classes, there are other objects, the prices of which are fixed by law, under the name of "objets supplémentaires." These consist of additional attendants and materials which could not properly be classed under the general heads of funerals, but from which may be chosen by the families such things as they may think necessary to add to the effect of the funeral.

One subdivision consists of materials furnished to the families for purposes of dress, such as gloves, veils, &c., the prices of which, if obtained from the contractor, are fixed by law. On the price of all these objects the contractor has to pay 15 per cent. to the "fabriques des églises et consistoires."

There is a special tariff for coffins, of which the following is a copy:—

Tariff of Coffins.—(In Francs.)

Designation of Ages.	Oak.		Lead.	Fir.	Furnishing.			
					Interior.		Exterior.	
	Ordinary.	Strong.			Satin.	Percale.	Cloth.	Velvet.
From birth to 1 year .	12	18	50	6	40	10	60	120
1 year to 3 years .	15	25	70	9	60	12	80	160
3 years to 7 years .	20	30	87	12	80	15	100	200
7 ,, 15 ,, .	27	40	120	15	100	20	120	250
15 ,, 20 ,, .	34	47	150	18	120	30	147	300
20 years and above .	44	60	200	20				

Copper plates 10 centimètres by 6, with 15 letters . .	12 francs.
Leaden plates do do . . .	8 ,,
Plates above these dimensions, *in copper*	40 ,,
Do do *in lead*	20 ,,

The contractor incurs the sole risk of bad debts. He must collect the amount of all the accounts at his own expense, and in case of loss he must nevertheless make good the proportion of the amount due to the "fabriques des églises et consistoires," whose interests must not suffer.

The vast saving of cost resulting from the conducting of funerals on a general fixed scheme, as contrasted with the enormous expense of the multiform and useless items which constitute the staple of English interments, must be sufficiently apparent. The regulations in use abroad give unity to the whole procedure; they remove obstructions, and give in reality a greater freedom for the attainment of the object than exists in England. Vexatious trouble and labour are obviated, needless expense is saved, and the relatives have thus a larger sum at their disposal for monumental objects and for religious and charitable purposes.

These advantages I found to be fully appreciated, and such opinions were several times expressed by intelligent persons.

There are laws throughout all the countries we visited which prescribe that no interment shall take place till the fact and cause of death are duly attested by a qualified medical practitioner. The procedure followed differs in different cities.

In Paris and Munich, the verification must in every instance be made by public officers, who are generally medical men in practice, and who receive a fee for each verification. At Leipzig the duty is performed by the regular medical attendant of the family, if there be one, but if the decease has taken place without a medical man having been in attendance, the verification must be made by the public officer. At Berlin and Frankfort, the certificate is filled up by the family attendant.

Where there are regularly appointed verificators, the districts of the city are divided between them, and as soon as death takes place the fact must be communicated to the district verificator, who proceeds to the house and signs the certificate after making the necessary examination.

The instructions under which these officers act are of a very stringent character, and the procedure is intended to obviate premature interment, and to detect crime.

The French and German method of verification is intended to be *preventive*. A number of instances were mentioned to me in which crimes which would otherwise have escaped notice were detected by the keen and practised eye of the verificator, and the general opinion certainly was that much crime was prevented.* I heard of no cases of that cold calculating destruction of successive members of the same family which has disclosed itself in England. Such a succession of murders, or the poisoning of children, or allowing them to die from neglect, in order to obtain the burial-money from a club in which they were insured, too frequently pass unnoticed, but under the system of verification they could hardly escape being brought under judicial inquiry, and crime might possibly be diminished by a knowledge of the certainty of its discovery.

All the cemeteries we have seen in the places visited partake more of the character of graveyards, or cities of the dead, than of that of cemeteries, properly so called. They contain a few trees and shrubs, planted along the walks and among the graves. Most of them appear overcrowded, partly from the too close proximity of the graves, and partly from the absence of a proper space of ground for ornamental purposes.

The cemetery at Frankfort is the best planted, and those at Paris can boast of more monumental beauty and better arrangement than any of the others. The effect of every one is, however, lessened from a want of a proper appreciation of the necessity of open green spaces and groups of wood to give relief to the sad uniformity of the tomb. I feel persuaded that if a proper effect is to be produced on the feelings, it is not by a cemetery all *grave-ground*, but by such a distribution of the grave spaces as will unite as much of natural beauty with architectural and monumental decoration as circumstances will permit. Even in the cemeteries of Stuttgard, where the grave spaces are larger than elsewhere, the want of breaking up of the graves into groups is painfully felt. All is grave-ground except the walks; and this special case, in which the actual amount of surface allowed is larger than any allotted in our English cemeteries, (at least, so far as I know,) points out clearly the necessity of other and better arrangements.

The German monuments have generally as little to boast of in the matter of taste as our own. In some instances, however, there are fine works of art in sculpture and painting. The cross is the customary decoration among Lutherans and Catholics, and in some instances a neat, plain, lettered slab of stone or marble is laid on the grave, instead of a tombstone. The most suitable form of decoration is produced by levelling the surface of the grave and planting it with flowers.

* In a written communication received from Dr. Radius, Professor of Pathology and Pharmacy in Leipzig, he says—"The examination of the dead has been very useful. . . . . I myself know two cases in which death by strangulation was discovered by the medical man."

Many of the monuments in the Parisian cemeteries are finer than most of those we saw in Germany. On the whole, however, the subject of monumental decoration has not yet approached the excellence of antiquity.

One of the most striking circumstances in the practice of interments in the German cities and in Paris is the absence of distinction among the dead of the various Christian denominations—all are buried side by side, without question and without scruple. I met with no one instance in which a denominational burial-place existed. At Frankfort it was stated that the Roman Catholics had religious scruples about interring their dead in unconsecrated ground, and that, although they constitute the minority of the population, the Protestant Confessions made no objection to their consecrating the whole of the new cemetery. They did so, and the dead of both communions sleep together.

The case of the Jews is the only exceptional one I heard of. Their reasons for separate burial are national as well as religious, and a proper enclosure is provided for their accommodation.

I have thus laid before the Board the general results of this interesting inquiry; the more minute details of which will be found in the special reports on the different cities visited. The impression produced on my own mind by the whole examination has been one of mingled pleasure and pain. It has been very pleasing to see so much already done both by Governments and people to rescue the last remains of humanity from desecration, and to foster proper feelings of reverence for the dead; and at the same time very painful to consider the contrast presented by many of the parochial arrangements in our own country.

The principles of medical police involved are better known in Germany than in England, and hence a more enlightened appreciation of the need of extramural sepulture on sanitary grounds was found to exist than is commonly the case in this country. Though great advances have been made, and are still in progress, in the continental cities, much yet remains to be done before all the requirements of a complete method of disposing of the dead are fulfilled; but notwithstanding this, I feel perfectly satisfied, on comparing the results of the two systems of interment, that our own is one great error; that it is highly discreditable to us as a nation; and that it ought to be tolerated only so long, and no longer, than is absolutely necessary to make provisions for its entire abolition.

The experience which has been acquired abroad is sufficient to show what may be done in England; and I am persuaded that, in the hands of those who have carefully and perseveringly devoted their attention to the subject, it will be found no very difficult matter to effect results of a higher order than any that have hitherto been arrived at. I have the honour to be,

My Lords and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

JOHN SUTHERLAND.

Gwydyr House, Whitehall, London,
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EXTRA MURAL SEPULTURE.
PLAN
Shewing the relative distances of certain proportions of the Population of the Metropolis from the River Thames along which Reception Houses are proposed to be established and from the existing
METROPOLITAN CEMETERIES.
Note of Explanation
The Red Lines parallel to the River represent half Mile distances from its banks, North and South. The Red Circles represent a distance of Two Miles Radius from the several existing Metropolitan Cemeteries which they surround.
Between Vauxhall Bridge and Lambeth on the North side of the River upwards of Three quarters of a Million of Inhabitants reside within a Mile and a half of the River bank.
Whilst this amount of Population within ½ Mile or an average distance of three quarters of a mile from Reception Houses established along the banks of the River, they would on an average of nearly three miles in that most greater distance from any of the present Metropolitan Cemeteries.
The chief portion of the dense population on the South side of the River is situated within one mile of its banks and consists of upwards of one third of a Million. The amount of population which it would thus be of an average only of half a mile from the proposed Reception Houses would be at an average of three miles also from the nearest present Cemetery
Scale
Miles
Hampstead
Highgate
Kilburn
Willesden
Paddington
Chelsea
Battersea
Clapham
Brixton
Camberwell
Peckham
Deptford
Greenwich
Woolwich
Plaistow Level
East Ham
Barking
Dagenham
Plumstead Marshes
Erith Marshes
Erith
E. Wickham
Lewisham
ELTHAM
Bexley
Nth Cray
Sidcup
Chislehurst
St Mary Cray
BROMLEY
Sydenham
Norwood
Dulwich
Streatham
Tooting
Wandsworth
Putney
Barnes
Richmond
Richmond Park
Kingston
Hampton
Bushey Park
Teddington
Twickenham
Isleworth
Hounslow
Heston
Norwood
Ealing
Hanwell
Greenford
Perivale
Wembley
Harrow on the Hill
Northolt
Pinner
Hendon
Finchley
Whetstone
Edmonton
Tottenham
Walthamstow
Chingford
Woodford
Loughton
Epping
Epping Forest
Romford
Hornchurch
Upminster
Dagenham
Barking
Tottenham
Hackney
Stoke Newington
Islington
Clerkenwell
Holborn
Bloomsbury
Marylebone
Paddington
Kensington
Fulham
Putney
Wimbledon
Merton
Mitcham
Morden
Malden
Carshalton
Beddington
CROYDON
Wallington
Hayes
Orpington
Waltham Abbey
Ongar
Barking Level
Plaistow Level
Plumstead Marshes
Erith Marshes
Woolwich
Greenwich
Deptford
Lewisham
Dulwich
Norwood
Streatham
Tooting
Wandsworth
Putney
Barnes
Richmond
Kingston
Hampton
Bushey Park
Teddington
Twickenham
Isleworth
Hounslow
Heston
Norwood
Ealing
Hanwell
Greenford
Perivale
Wembley
Harrow on the Hill
Northolt
Pinner
Hendon
Finchley
Whetstone
Edmonton
Tottenham
Walthamstow
Chingford
Woodford
Loughton
Epping
Epping Forest
Romford
Hornchurch
Upminster
Dagenham
Barking
Tottenham
Hackney
Stoke Newington
Islington
Clerkenwell
Holborn
Bloomsbury
Marylebone
Paddington
Kensington
Fulham
Putney
Wimbledon
Merton
Mitcham
Morden
Malden
Carshalton
Beddington
CROYDON
Wallington
Hayes
Orpington
Waltham Abbey
Ongar
HIGHGATE CEMETERY
ABNEY PARK CEMETERY
KENSAL GREEN CEMETERY
PADDINGTON CEMETERY
BROMPTON CEMETERY
KENSINGTON CEMETERY
NORWOOD CEMETERY
TOWER HAMLETS CEMETERY
NUNHEAD CEMETERY
LEYTONSTONE CEMETERY
WOODGRANGE CEMETERY
GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY
EASTERN COUNTIES RAILWAY
LONDON & BLACKWALL RAILWAY
GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY
SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
SOUTH EASTERN RAILWAY
LONDON & CROYDON RAILWAY
RIVER LEA
RIVER THAMES
RENHAULT FOREST
EPPING FOREST
HAMES

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